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TEN YEARS IN INDIA; — vol. 2

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or,

THE LIFE OF A YOUNG OFFICER.

CAPTAIN ALBERT HERVEY,

40TH REGIMENT OF MADRAS INFANTRY.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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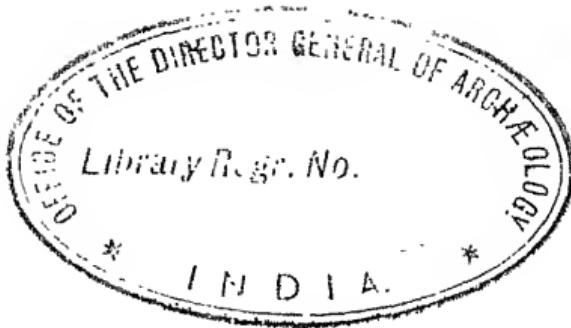
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TEN YEARS  
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## CHAPTER I.

Joyous Excitement at the End of a Day's March—Pitching Tents—Maity Boys—The Mess-Tent Breakfast—An Encampment—Military Regulations—Camp Sites—Camp Retainers—Camp Bazaar—System of Fraud—Halting Days—Occupations and Amusements—Ladies in Camp—Camp Festivities—Chenroypatam—Bandies—Tanks—Bird-shooting—Bamboo-Rafts—Griffin Sportsman and the Chatty—Mode of obtaining Coolies—Their Character and Treatment—The golden Law of Charity.

WHEN the morning's weary march is drawing to a close the men jerk up their knapsacks, and step out boldly; the fellows in the rear calling out to their comrades in front to push on—“*Chulloh! Chulloh bhāī!*” (or, in English, “Move on! move on, brother!”) is the cry; and when the encamp-

ment, in its embryo state, appears in the distance, the “*advance guard*” shout out most joyously, “Arréh dēhrāh! dekh dēhrāh! dēhrāh!” (“The tents! Look at the tents! The tents!”) Glad-some tidings to all parties; for it not unfrequently happens that, in consequence of the distance, or some other circumstance, the troops are not under canvass until past eleven o’clock, at which time the sun is *precious* hot. Hot, indeed! So hot, that everybody, white as well as black, human being and beast of burthen, are glad to come to their journey’s end. When arrived at within a quarter of a mile from the camp that is to be, the “*Halt*” is sounded. Officers then dismount and fall in with their companies; the dressing and covering are taken up; trowsers that had been tucked up are let down; dust shaken off their hair and moustache; turbans (or chacos) and knapsacks cleaned, and every thing put into apple-pie order previously to marching in.

When all is ready, the “Quick march” is given; the band strikes up a merry tune; the men step beautifully together to the exhilarating sounds; and the column winds up the road on to the alignment marked out, where it forms up into line, which is immediately dressed and corrected. The reports are collected and delivered by the adjutant, and the quartermaster points out his arrangements for the encampment. The men for duty are marched to the front; arms are piled, and the regiment

broken off; upon which the men generally give a shout of joy, unsling their packs, and commence taking off their accoutrements.

The Guards, being inspected, are marched off to their respective posts, sentries are thrown out over the arms, the colours are lodged in due form, and a guard placed over them. All the married men, as well as others who have relations and families, run down the road to help up their baggage and bullocks; while the care-for-nothing bachelors divest themselves of their uniforms, and put on the light, comfortable, and cool apparel of their country, and walk about, or assist in pitching their tents immediately in rear of their piles of muskets, which make a formidable show, regularly ranged as they are in one extensive line from right to left, with their angry bayonets glittering in the bright sunshine.

The European officers run off to the mess-tent, where, if the breakfast be not ready, a general shouting takes place for the eatables and drinkables. Hunger will brook of no delay, particularly if the means for appeasing the cravings of the appetite are procurable and not ready. Hungry men, just off a long march, are very impatient, and woe betide the unfortunate caterer or messman if they have to wait.

If the tea and coffee are not ready for immediate use, they *ought* to have been: never mind

the fire not lighting, or the milk not brought in time. If the dish full of eggs, bad, good, and indifferent, is not on the table, it is the butler's fault ; and if the stews or omelettes, the rice or the curry, cold tongues or hams, or hunter's beef, &c., &c., are not placed in rank and file, "down the middle and up again," a heavy fine is imposed upon the culprit, to say nothing of a variety of bitter invectives hurled at the heads of all the domestics connected with the establishment.

Defending themselves is quite out of the question ; indeed no defence is heard or even permitted. There has been plenty of time since last evening to provide breakfasts for a thousand hungry subalterns, and condign punishment *must* be awarded.

And, again, if each officer's servant is not ready, present in the tent, awaiting the arrival of their respective masters, with camp chair, hot-water plate, cup and saucer, knife and fork, silver spoons and muffineer, all prepared and arranged, miserable wretch ! he is to be pitied indeed ! What the consequences of neglect or delay are, I cannot take upon myself to say : the servant catches it, without doubt.

The uninitiated must be here informed that, in marching, the mess does not carry open any furniture, crockery, glassware, or cutlery ; nor is the plate-chest used. Were such things to be daily unpacked, the breakage and trouble would be end-

less. All the mess things are therefore carefully put away, and never opened until arrived at the next station. The only articles kept in use are the mess camp tables, a few old dishes, and some old carving-knives, &c.

The officers therefore are obliged to provide themselves with necessaries for the table, and come to their meals in what is termed "*camp-fashion*," each individual making his servant carry a chair, three or four plates, a cup and saucer, knives, forks, spoons, and those invariable accompaniments to an Indian officer's plate chest, a pair of silver mufineers, one containing salt, and the other pepper.

A servant travelling thus laden presents a droll appearance. On his head is his master's chair; across his back is slung something resembling a bundle of clothes, but which, upon examination, will be found to contain a number of plates of a variety of patterns, and other articles of crockery, carefully wrapped up in the domestic's own pieces of drapery, some of them none of the cleanest. If any of the crockery is broken, others cannot be supplied, so the servant is obliged to be on the alert against any such untoward accident, or else he is sure to get a good *welting*. Then, in his "*cummer-bund*" (or waist-cloth) are concealed those precious articles, "*master's silber tings*," one of each, with cutlery also.

This servant (yclept "*maity-boy*") always starts on ahead, or follows in rear of his master's horse

on the march, so as to be in time for him on his coming into the mess-tent. Arrived there, the domestic, with all dispatch, places the chair at the table, on which he arranges the plates, cup, saucer, &c., &c., having previously wiped each article with a towel, if he has one, and if not, with the corner of his jacket, or the end of his waist-cloth, taking care to impart to all a nice polish, in the same manner as the old apple-women at home do the fruit which they are vending.

These arrangements made, the faithful slave takes off his turban, from the folds of which he extracts his master's table napkin, neatly flattened and delightfully perfumed with cocoa-nut oil, which the natives use in great profusion for their hair. All this done, he awaits with impatience his master's coming; for, poor fellow, there is no provender for him until after breakfast, and then he feasts off the "*débris*" on his master's plate, cunningly concealing in the aforesaid waistcloth any nice bits of meat or bones that he may *chance* to find thereon: that, indeed, is very seldom; for master is generally so hungry, that there is very little left on his plate for poor maity-boy.

Breakfast after a march is a very delightful meal. We are hungry—and hunger is an undeniably exquisite sauce for all dishes; the viands are good, the tea and coffee excellent, and the whole very soon disappears. It is an amusing sight to watch the eaters, each man taking care of "num-

ber one," and not minding his neighbour. For the first ten minutes or so, scarcely a word is spoken; some sit down as they enter, others more patient take off their uniforms, wash their hands, make themselves decent and comfortable in white jackets, and then come to the table.

Dish after dish is emptied, cup after cup of tea is swallowed. There are generally two or three large pewter teapots placed on the table; these are passed up and down, and each man helps himself; the sugar following the same course; but the milk, which is kept in a huge soup-tureen, is placed in the centre of the table, and ladled out to those who send for it. Milk being an article very cheap in India, is supplied in large quantities, so there is no stinting; the same with eggs, though it not unfrequently happens, that on a body of troops arriving in a village, there is such a demand for them, that to collect the required quantity, those on which hens are sitting are also added to the fresh ones; and the consequence is, that little chickens in their embryo state are often found where something *eatable* was expected!

Breakfast over and hunger appeased, conversation begins. The events of the morning are talked over, and the mode of spending the day is discussed; the laugh and joke go round, and all is merriment and fun. Some light their hookahs and cigars, while others quit the tent to look after their

own baggage, and to superintend the erecting of their temporary abodes.

Outside, a very busy animating scene presents itself; and the eye of the griffin sees many a sight to which he is unaccustomed. The whole ground is covered with living beings; cattle and baggage; men, women, and children; servants busily engaged in pitching tents, and wrangling with each other; horses and ponies neighing; officers and soldiers running to and fro; coolies coming in with their loads; palankeens and doolies; sick carts and bandies; stragglers arriving one after another; unruly bullocks kicking off their loads, and running helter-skelter; timid women and children screeching, and men hollowing; such a bustle and confusion, that, to the stranger the whole sight would appear as if there was great want of arrangement, and give him an idea of a sad state of discipline. But such cannot be helped where there is an enormous host of camp-followers attached to a corps.

Of course, on service, that number is materially diminished, as the men's families do not accompany them, and the followers are limited only to those whose presence in camp are absolutely required. The ignorant generally contrive to form opinions on subjects with which they are utterly unacquainted; and those who are not aware of how things are managed or arranged in military movements, or aught connected with the profession,

invariably put down any apparent confusion, or irregularity, to a lax state of discipline.

How surprised does a man, unaccustomed to such sights, appear, when he finds all this bustle and all these supposed irregularities, (both unavoidable concomitants of troops moving in India,) suddenly subside into quiet and silence ! Every person or thing finds a place, and becomes settled for the day, and what seems at first arrival a mass of irretrievable mismanagement, turns out in the end to be a matter of easy contrivance, and particularly so in arrangement of interior economy to the experienced, as it would seem the contrary to those who know nothing about the business.

I remember well my utter astonishment the first time that I myself witnessed the scene I have so faintly described. I thought the people would never have done arriving, that the tents would never cease pitching, and that we should be in the same confused state the whole day. But how agreeably disappointed was I to find that in less than an hour's time the whole camp was as quiet and still as if we had been stationary for months ! And this is indeed the case always.

Our regulations are so strict, and the necessity of acting up to them so glaring, for more reasons than I can at present enter into, that we are compelled, for own own comfort's sake, to make everybody attend to his respective office; otherwise an en-

campment would indeed be a medley of everything that was irregular and uncomfortable, evincing but scanty proof of discipline and good management.

But such is not the case in the Madras army, which has always had the character, (and will always have it too, please God,) of doing every item of duty in a proper soldier-like manner. Our comrades of the other Presidencies abuse us for being too particular in trivial matters, but they may rely on it that the stricter the discipline, the better the army, say what they like to the contrary.

Choosing a site for an encampment is no easy matter. At every town, or village, or halting-place, there is a piece of ground allotted for the use of troops, and, as I before said, the quarter-master of a regiment is always sent on with his establishment of camp-colour-men, for the express purpose of looking over the ground, pitching the flags, and arranging for the disposal of the followers, as well as of the fighting men.

But it often happens, that the space is too limited, or the site is unhealthy, or covered with water, or otherwise objectionable ; in that case, the quarter-master is compelled to select a more desirable spot, and very often has to go to some distance from the place before he can fix upon one sufficiently extensive and in every other way calculated for the purpose he requires ; and, the further he goes, in my opinion, the better.

I should prefer encamping a couple of miles dis-

tance from native habitations ; for bringing troops in contact with a dirty town or a miserable village, in which all sorts of sickness and diseases are prevalent, is, I consider, highly objectionable ; and independently of that, the distance keeps the men out of the arrack-shops, of which there are always many in every place ; and, as we have supplies of all sorts invariably brought into camp for the consumption of everybody, there is absolutely no necessity for any connection whatever with the natives ; indeed, I would never allow a single soul to go near them, punishing all infringements of the prohibition with the utmost severity.

The quarter-master, having fixed upon his ground, proceeds first to mark out that intended for the troops ; he knows the strength of his regiment and the number of tents, so judges well the space requisite to contain the whole, officers and men, the hospital, bazaar, and mess-tents included ; this important point settled, he proceeds with his under-strappers to pitch flags, marking the boundaries of the other encampment for the families, out of which nobody is allowed, upon pain of severe penalty, to go.

I will now try and give the reader an idea of what sort of a thing an encampment is. The whole area or space is, as nearly as possible, a square, or, at all events, a parallelogram, inclosed within the camp colours, which indicate the bounds of the same. The front being decided upon, the

first tent pitched is that intended to hold the advanced or *outlying piquet*, as it is called ; this is usually placed some yards in front of the first line, which is composed of the men's tents, four to each company, and capable of containing each twenty-five men. In rear of this are the subalterns' tents, at a convenient distance ; the next is the captains' line ; but where there are so few officers present with a regiment as now-a-days, captains and subalterns generally pitch in one line.

The next in line is the commanding officer's, on each side of which stand the adjtant's and quarter-master's tents, his right and left hand men, his staff, the commanding officer's or head quarters being distinguished by a large Union Jack flag floating on a tolerably sized staff, or pole. On one flank of this last mentioned line is pitched the mess-tent, and on the other the hospital ; but this arrangement depends on the nature and extent of the ground ; it is, however, always preferable to have the hospital tents as far removed as convenient, not only in consequence of the disagreeables of sick people, medicines, &c. &c., but to avoid the possibility of contagion, in the event of cholera, or other epidemic.

The lines of tents thus described are placed at certain distances, according to regulations, varying, however, in proportion as there is space. Baggage carts and other accompaniments are drawn up in

rear of the respective tents of individuals to whom they belong. Horses and cattle are not allowed to be picketed within the precincts of the camp. The quarter-master appoints a convenient spot for this purpose at a proper distance, but within the boundary of the other encampment. This arrangement is, however, often infringed, the more the pity, as nothing tends to create dirt and filth so much as the presence of these or any other animals in rear of our tents.

The field-hospital is always well contrived. The number of tents for the accommodation of the sick allowed by regulation is in accordance with the strength of the regiment. These are pitched, as I before said, either on one of the flank faces of the square, or on some eligible spot dry and airy, and free from trees, or bushes. A tent is allowed for the medical subordinate, and another for the protection and dispensing of the medicines, &c. &c. There is, also, a tent for the dead, when occasion requires it. In the rear of these are the tents of the medical officers, ranged according to number. The doolies are placed in front or rear, or on the flanks of the sick tents, as the ground admits.

And now, I think, I have pretty well explained the nature of an encampment, as regards those immediately connected with the military part of the business. It still remains for me to touch

slightly upon that of the followers, which, as I observed, is regularly marked out in boundary, and out of which not a soul can locate himself without special sanction from the superior authority.

The families and other followers are, however, permitted to erect their tents, or *pals*, or temporary huts, promiscuously, without any regard to regularity, partly from an objection to interfere with the mens' private arrangements, and partly with a view to save time; as it would, indeed, be endless trouble to insist upon any observance of military regularity or precision, the which is more likely to give rise to grumbling and discontent, doing, thereby, more harm than good, by rendering the privacy of the women (of which the natives are peculiarly tenacious in all castes) liable to be intruded upon. This latter circumstance alone is apt to give dissatisfaction more than anything else; "bully and tyrannize over us as much as you like, but do not meddle with our families," is what is frequently said amongst them; and those who know the character of our native soldiery can, I dare say, vouch for the truth of my remark.

Each man, therefore, selects his own particular spot, whereon to erect his abode for the time being, for the reception of his family; and some of these are such wretched coverings, that I cannot help in this place attempting a description, which may serve to give the reader a faint idea of the kind of

thing I allude to. Those who can afford it (or are fortunate enough to have one in their family as a sort of *heir-loom*), are provided with small tents, or *pals*, about six feet long and three feet wide, with a pitch of about three or four feet from the ground, upon two sticks, or thin bamboos; some have longer, and some even smaller than these; and many, who have none at all, stretch out a few old *cumblies* (blankets), threadbare and patched, upon sticks, under the imperfect covering of which, they shelter their poor wives and children.

Many, again, who have neither the one nor the other, put up a miserable shed, composed of boughs and branches, and anything they can pick up from the neighbouring jungles; wretched abodes, indeed, into which they crowd by dozens, a motley group of young and old, presenting a sad picture of discomfort and poverty. The appearance of this assemblage of tents, pals and hovels; of a variety of forms and sizes, presents a striking contrast to the regular encampment, consisting, as the latter does, of large comfortable coverings for men as well as for officers. 'Tis only the poverty-stricken married soldiery who are so miserably provided for, and it is they who suffer principally all the hardships and privations of a line of march, themselves having their respective duties to attend to, as well as the looking after and providing for their

numerous families, consisting, as before observed, of some eight or ten souls to each fighting man.

The number of people, men, women and children, with beasts of burthen picketed in all directions, and covering the surface of the ground (sometimes not very extensive), the little pals, &c. &c., thickly crowded together, will, I think, enable the reader to form an adequate conception of the scene I have been trying to describe; but although, I fear me, I have fallen short of the sketch, yet, at the same time, I flatter myself I am not far wrong in the general outline. By witnessing the sight alone can anybody know what an Indian encampment is.

Such are the discomforts to which our poor soldiers are exposed, even when nothing out of the common routine occurs to add to them; but what must the state of these poor creatures be when disease in its most appalling form visits a camp, carrying off, day after day, its victims by twenties and thirties? If the mind shudders at the bare contemplation, what must it be to be an eye-witness to the reality? But I think it probable that I shall have to touch more largely upon this truly distressing subject hereafter, so will let it pass for the present, hoping that the feeling hearts of my readers, and the charitably inclined in power, will lend their aid, by their experience and influence, to do somewhat towards ameliorating the sufferings

and bettering the condition of those very soldiers by whose valour, courage, discipline and unshaken fidelity, we hold fast in our hands the richest jewel in our country's crown !

I have now only one item left in my description of an encampment, and that is one of the most important and most useful, as well as the most indispensably requisite. What I allude to is the "*bazaar*," or sutlers' camp. Whenever anybody of troops move from one station to another, it is the rule for the quartermaster-general's department to report to the civil authorities of the districts through which their route lays, informing them of the number of fighting men, and probable number of camp-followers accompanying.

This report enables the civil powers to make arrangements for the furnishing of supplies at the different halting-places, and this is done by the understrappers at the towns, villages and hamlets, directing the attendance in camp of a certain number of bazaar-men or shopkeepers, who are to bring with them supplies of all sorts for consumption, which I need not, I think, enumerate here.

Each article has a fixed price, and every thing supplied is immediately paid for. On the march of a body of troops, of a regiment, for instance, a guard is always sent on in advance, under command of a steady non-commissioned officer, for the pur-

pose of giving protection to these people; and a place is fixed upon by the quartermaster, where a large flag is hoisted on a long pole, and here the "*bunnyahs*," or shopkeepers, are regularly ranged in line according to the articles they are vending; for instance, those selling rice, in one line; those selling grain, or vetch, or peas, in another; those with curry-stuff and other condiments, in another; then, again, the butcher has his stall apart; the poultry-man takes up his position here; the vendor of fish (if any) there; then the pawn-leaf man sits close to the flag-staff, and he of tobacco behind him; while the oil-seller takes up his station on one flank, and the straw and torches are disposed of on the other.

Each village has its head man, or "*sahsildar*," or "*sharistadar*," or "*cutwaul*," or "*patail*," with his posse of "*peons*," or policemen, according to the size or importance of the place. Some of these latter, accompanied by a person in authority, come to the camp, as a representative of the district civil officer, for the purpose of seeing that the things are properly disposed of, and that the soldiers pay for such as they take; and, in order that no disputes may arise or disturbance take place between the buyers and sellers, the regimental cutwaul and his two peons are always in attendance; while the havildar, commanding the bazaar guard, is also on the spot to preserve order and to check irregularities.

Thus a plentiful supply of provisions is always in camp, and the articles are *supposed* to be of the best description. Nothing pay, nothing have, is the order; there is no "*tick*" allowed: the consequences are, that the dealings between the sutlers and the camp are all fair, or, at all events, they are presumed to be so; but it is to be feared that, as natives are great rascals in every situation where self-interest is concerned, there is much more knavery going on than people are probably aware of, but which those alone know who are at all acquainted with their characters. There is certainly a "*nir-rūkh*," or "*tariff*," or fixed price, to everything brought to be sold; but that does not prove that they are not purchased up for half their fixed valuation previously to being brought into camp, and who is it that benefits thereby? Not the poor bazaar-man; certainly, but the head man and his myrmidons.

The prices are fixed, and there is no abatement: the bunnyahs vend the things at those prices, while they are *bona fide* and intrinsically worth another; the difference (and that a clear profit too of perhaps more than half) going into the pockets of those very men who are placed over them as trustworthy, and who are present in camp for the express purpose of preventing fraud, which they are absolutely and most barefacedly conniving at. These men take the profit to themselves, giving

the bazaar-fellows a trifle to make them hold their tongues.

I have frequently gone into these bazaars, or market-places, while in camp, and have seen the cheaterly I allude to going on, without knowing exactly how to check it; and I have often heard our men say the same. I remember, on one occasion, a poor sepoy of my company came to me for assistance, saying that the rice was very dear, and that he had not the wherewithal to pay for it. I always made it a rule to look into every complaint myself, so, taking up my hat and stick, accompanied the man to the place of buying and selling. I took with me a few rupees also, and, going up to the first rice-man, asked him the price of his grain; he told me, so much. I asked the next, and the next, and obtained the same answer. Being able to converse fluently in Hindustanee, I addressed myself to one of the village peons present, (a Moslem,) and said—

“Come, now, tell me the truth, is this rice here of the same price as what *you yourself* get in the village? What do *you*, now, give for your own particular use?”

“Why, sir,” said the fellow, “the rice brought to camp is sold at a particular price. I cannot say what it is sold for *out* of camp.”

“Oh! you cannot say,” inquired I—“and why



cannot you say, pray? You are here on purpose to render every assistance and information?"

"Yes, sir," said the man, "but I am *unable* to tell you the difference in price between the rice in camp and that in the village."

"Well," said I, "if you cannot tell me, I will go into the village myself and see. Come along, my lad," added I, turning to the sepoy, and we forthwith started off to the village hard by, and there, to my astonishment, purchased rice of a superior quality to that vended in the camp for half the price. I gave the poor old sepoy a present of a rupee's worth; and, not wishing to make any more fuss about the matter, went back to camp, and said not a word to any one. My sepoy returned with me, rejoiced at having been so fortunate.

This little anecdote I have given, as one instance out of thousands, of the rascality and cheatery going on; the subordinate authorities, as it were, aiding and abetting, without in any way attempting to prevent the evil. I must, however, remark, in justice to the superior civil powers, that these irregularities are carried on, in a great measure, quite unknown to them. It is impossible for a man to be everywhere; whilst, therefore, he is at one end of his district, the understrappers at the other are practising their knavish tricks with impunity, to the detriment of those under whom they

are serving, and the disgrace of the responsible and trustworthy situations they hold.

Let it not be supposed that I have made the above remark to cast a slur upon that honourable body of gentlemen composing our civil service; far from it; I have merely cited it as an instance of the shameful proceedings of people who are supposed to be as honest as those by whom they are employed; fellows who are as smooth and as silvery-tongued as possible when their superiors are present, and, on the contrary, deep, cunning and crafty, when they are absent.

Our sepoys suffer considerably from these shameful proceedings, as do also the officers. A few summary examples, and strict scrutiny, can alone put a stop to them; and it is to be hoped that, by severely punishing those persons who are privy to such doings, a great benefit will be conferred on travellers and the public in general, and a poor man will be able to get himself a feed of rice, with the comfortable consolation that he has not been cheated in its purchasing.

It is always customary, unless anything occurs to prevent it, for a regiment marching to have a halt, or resting-day. This halt takes place every third day; that is, there is no marching on the third. There are two days of moving, and one of rest, and this enables both men and cattle to brush up and recruit from the fatigues of the journey, and

also causes a break, as it were, which is in every respect pleasant to all parties. On such occasions, all damages to our travelling-appurtenances are repaired ; horses are shod (that is, those that require it), broken tent ropes replaced, and rents mended ; the men touch up their arms and accoutrements, while the old women and other idlers in camp wash their clothes.

The officers form themselves into parties, and go out shooting or hunting, followed by as many of the men as are fond of sport. The performance of all duties is strictly and regularly gone through ; companies are inspected ; arms and ammunition examined ; the forms of guard-mounting are observed, and everything is done to keep up that regimen of the military profession, so peculiar to the Madras army.

We invariably had a grand cricket-match on these days, if the ground admitted of it ; the two sides playing for so many sheep, and having a good "*zérāfūt*" (feast) afterwards. The officers always joined in the amusements, contributing all in their power towards that good feeling which should invariably exist in the ranks of every regiment, a *desideratum* of such material consequence towards maintaining proper discipline amongst the men.

There is always a grand dinner in the mess-tent on a halting-day, to which the ladies in camp are respectively invited, they coming as the rest do,

*“camp fashion.”* The members of the mess are on such occasions dressed out somewhat better than on common days, to meet their fair guests. It is indeed a pleasant thing to be favoured with the presence of the female portion of *our family* (for where all are on good terms in a corps one may look upon the whole as such); they add a charm to our wandering life; put us on our good behaviour; sharpen up our dormant energies; excite our wit, and elevate us to something above the common humdrum of a monotonous existence; monotonous when compared to that which we should otherwise lead, were our fair friends always in our society. But as these are not matters of every-day occurrence, and their visits being like those of angels (angels they are too), few and far between, we learn to appreciate their presence the more, and feel doubly honoured when they do enter the precincts of our tents.

A dinner of this description is a very merry one; (who can help being merry when the ladies are with them?) we have plenty of fun, and eat and drink right joyfully. The old butler contrives to put on a capital dinner, and the wines are cooled with saltpetre, not only as a treat allowed on halting days, but because the ladies are dining with us. On other occasions, there is no such indulgence, unless each individual chooses to carry his own, and that is expensive enough.

The way we manage to cool our wine and beer on ordinary days is very simple, and I may as well mention it here for the benefit of the ignorant in such matters. Take the bottle, and suspend it by the neck to the door of your tent, keeping the opposite one open to admit a thorough draft of air; cover the suspended culprit with a napkin or cloth, which must be kept well wet. The hot wind blowing upon this causes the water on the napkin to become cold; evaporation takes place, and imparts the coolness to the liquor, which renders it deliciously palatable.

Our water we cool in the same manner. The "*goglets*" (or earthenware bottles) in which we keep it are porous, and consequently the outer surface is always damp: the wind blowing upon them cools the contents sufficiently to obviate the necessity of using saltpetre. But water is an ingredient which is seldom used as a drink by itself; indeed, for my part, I do not think it wise to drink it plain, without mixing it with brandy, or wine; for there is no knowing where it comes from, and what poison may be in it.

But, to return to our dinner. The officers' servants don clean clothes, and get themselves shaved and otherwise brushed up; the plates and dishes, knives and forks, receive an extra superfine polish; the table looks nice and tidy, and the whole is capital, considering that everything was the day

before in a state of bustle, confusion, and roughness.

While at dinner, the band is drawn up outside the tent, and we are enlivened with music, and in the evening, if the ground is even and grassy, we have a dance. Ladies are a great acquisition to a camp, in my opinion; although I know there are others who hold a different opinion. They have many inconveniences and privations to undergo, and some there are, poor creatures, who, with their young families, are exposed to many hardships, which it is a wonder their delicate constitutions can possibly undergo. I have seen them turn out of a morning—the rain pouring in torrents—from a warm bed into a cold palankeen, exposed to the wet and damp air, the children crying and worrying their mothers, who are themselves sadly perplexed with a variety of anxieties and cares, that keep mind and body in a state of excitement, which must do them much injury.

Although I say that ladies are an acquisition to a camp, still, I think, when it can be managed, it is a far better plan to have them sent on in advance to the station, to which the corps is going. But this cannot often be done, from various causes. Wives will not leave their husbands, or husbands will not part with their wives; the parties cannot afford the extra expenses of posting and separate establishments; or a lady objects to travelling

alone. Again, the family may have no friends to receive them on their reaching the end of the journey; there are no such conveniences as inns or hotels for travellers to go to, and the poor lady knows not how to manage when she does arrive.

These and many other reasons render it absolutely necessary for the wife, with her little ones, to accompany her husband; and, although there may be many objections attending their being in camp, still, after all, it is a consolation and comfort to them to be with their lawful protectors, by whose advice they can manage so much better, and in whose society they *must* be far happier than if away from them by themselves.

In the course of our journey, we arrived at a large town and fort, called Chenroypatam, a place of consequence in the days of Hyder Ally and the Sultaun Tippoo, but now of comparative insignificance. The fort is a combination of old dilapidated walls, with circular bastions, peculiar to oriental fortifications. A portion of the works was shown me as having been planned and commenced by the sultaun himself; indeed there is one part particularly pointed out to the traveller which to this day bears the name of *Tippoo's battery*. His fall at Seringapatam, however, put an end to all his designs of ambition and aggrandizement, as well as to everything else.

Here we again halted, staying two days instead  
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of one, during which time we had ample leisure to make preparations for our further progress towards the lower country. At this stage, we procured *bandies* or carts, for the conveyance of our baggage, the roads being practicable for such things; great lumbering affairs, on two very high wheels, neither ornamental nor useful, and upsetting at the least unevenness of the roads. They are drawn by two bullocks, and are capable of containing a good quantity of baggage.

At Chénroypatam there is a very large *tank*, more resembling an extensive lake. On this sheet of water we found innumerable flights of wild fowl, ducks, teal and cotton birds (a species of widgeon), all capital eating, and affording excellent sport. The tank is so very broad and deep, and the birds are so shy, that there was scarcely any possibility of getting at them, excepting by chance shots as they flew over our heads. Our success was, therefore, indifferent.

However, we contrived to construct two or three rafts, composed of the trunks of the *plantain-tree*, put together by means of bamboos lashed across them; four of these joined together, as I have described, form a very safe roomy raft, large enough to admit of two or three people upon it. At one end are fixed branches and boughs of trees by way of screen, and behind this *abattis* we used to sit, while a servant from behind would either push the

vessel along with a pole, or bamboo, in shallow water, or paddle her with a piece of board taken for that purpose.

In this manner, we used to approach the birds to within shot, when throwing a stone among them we would put the whole on the wing, which afforded us beautiful sport. But this was dangerous work, as it sometimes happens, as was the case with me, that the joining bamboos either break, or the trunks work themselves asunder; and, unless a man can swim he stands a good chance of being drowned, to say nothing of the risk of being snapped up by an alligator, which animal is generally a frequenter of all large pieces of water. I had a narrow escape at this place; my raft went to pieces, and, had we not all been good swimmers, we should have gone down. We contrived to save our guns, but powder, shot and the game bag, were all forfeited.

I remember a very laughable trick I played upon my fellow griffin at this place. He was very short-sighted, and made, in consequence, many ludicrous mistakes, one or two of which I have already related. Some religious natives had put a quantity of boiled rice, &c. &c. into an earthen pot, or *chatty*, as it is called, as an offering of propitiation, I suppose, to some deity, and had placed it upon the surface of the water, where it floated about, driven backwards and forwards by the breeze. My friend and I were walking along the

*bund* or bank, with our guns, on a shooting excursion, expecting to pick up something on the tank. I spied the chatty dancing very prettily on the mimic waves of this little sea ; it was of a darkish appearance, and at a distance had the look of a good sized duck. A sudden thought induced me to stop short and stoop down, which my companion did likewise.

“ What’s the matter ? ” inquired he.

“ Don’t you see ? ” said I, “ don’t you see it ? ”

“ See what ? I see nothing.”

“ You must be blind, then,” rejoined I, “ for if there is not as beautiful a duck as ever swam I am no true sportsman. Look there, man ! Look, how splendidly and gracefully it moves ! And so nicely in shot, too ! ”

“ Oh, ah ! Yes, I see it now,” said my chum. “ I see it well ; what a lovely creature ! Do let me have a shot at him ? ”

“ With all my heart,” said I, “ mind and take good aim, for it would be a pity to lose such a fine bird. Now’s your time ! ”

The gun went up to the shoulder, and after a long and steady aim was discharged, bang ! The duck, alias the chatty, had been hit and disappeared.

“ You have hit him,” said I ; “ wait a little, you’ll see him again presently. He has only dived. Look out now with your other barrel.”

"Oh, yes. *I thought* I had hit him," said my companion. "Did you hear the noise the shot made against him. He must have had a good dose. If he rises again, it will be as a dead bird."

"Wait a little," said I, "we shall see."

We waited, but no bird alive or dead made its appearance. The water was smooth and unruffled. We made another pause, but no bird still. I could stand it no longer, so burst out into a loud laugh.

"What are you laughing at, you great griffin?" inquired the disconcerted sportsman.

"Laughing at you, to be sure," replied I. "Why, what do you think you have been firing at?"

"At a duck, to be sure. What else do you think it could have been?"

"Nothing more or less than a black chatty," said I, "and now who is the griffin?"

"I do not believe you," said he, and shouldering his fowling-piece, he trudged off, evidently much chagrined at the mistake he had committed.

We soon came upon another Brahminical chatty, which cleared up the mystery. I made my friend take up his glass and look well at it. He was at length convinced of the mistake he had made, and rated me most unmercifully for having duped him. However, we returned to our tents that day with bags full of duck and teal, besides sundry other heads of game, so that he altogether made up for the mistake he made, in taking an earthen calibash for a live animal.

At Chenroypatam, we found a difficulty in collecting the required number of coolies. The head man of the place, and the *khilladar* (or commandant of the fort, a native), neither of them giving us any assistance. We were therefore obliged to resort to a stratagem, which had the desired result. The colonel gave orders to bring together as many coolies as could be procured, and had them placed in durance vile, posting a strong guard over them. He also seized one of the principal men and confined him likewise, until the number wanted were produced by the others, threatening them with similar treatment if they did not immediately exert themselves.

This succeeded beautifully; the coolies were produced that same evening, and the colonel, for fear of their decamping, took the precautionary measure of having them all locked up till the morning. The non-appearing of the coolies was entirely owing to the insolence of the *khilladar* (a proud, haughty Mysorean), who ought to have been well flogged for his misconduct. Being a servant, and in the pay of the government, it was his duty to have given every assistance in his power, instead of which the rogue had the audacity to refuse, at first, and then to say that no coolies were procurable; both downright and causeless falsehoods.

There never is any real difficulty in obtaining coolies; the only thing to be observed is to give

the poor fellows their hire ; they will then willingly go three or four marches with their employer ; this is their only means of subsistence, and surely the labourer is worthy of his hire, is he not ? The hire, too, is remarkably cheap, only three annas for every ten English miles.

Coolies are always afraid to go a journey, if they should have experienced severity or ill treatment from previous employers ; and it is indeed a crying shame that such helpless beings should be so harshly dealt with, when the slightest kindness, or indulgence, is attended with so much convenience and comfort. They will follow the traveller and carry their loads for miles and miles without murmuring, and prove themselves most useful and faithful also, which they cannot possibly be when harsh and severe measures are exercised towards them. And what a paltry pittance is the earning ! Poor black man ! When will your European fellow-creatures learn to look upon you as one of themselves !

I invariably made it a rule to be as kind to these poor wretches as my small circumstances would allow me. Some instances there were truly of misbehaviour (as will always be the case), but I looked upon them merely as exceptions. I do not think that I changed coolies more than three or four times during the whole march. On halting each day, I invariably gave them their wages immediately, and,

when we did not march, I always treated the whole of my followers by giving them a sheep or two, by way of encouragement to good behaviour.

Sheep of the description consumed by the common people are very cheap ; I have purchased them two per rupee, and sometimes more for that sum. The meat, however, rather resembles goat's flesh than mutton, and is moreover very tough, and not very palatable to a European. The natives contrive to masticate it well enough ; anything in the shape of wholesome flesh is better than empty stomachs, and when such things as sheep are given to them gratis, the gift is sure to be appreciated, and I think a couple of rupees thus expended are well laid out, for the poor men are always more willing and able to do their work, and to perform anything extra that may be required of them.

I look upon the act of contributing to the comforts of these labourers as one of charity ; for, considering their hard work, their paltry pittance, and their meagre fare, they are really objects of pity, and a present of the description I have mentioned is what they are unaccustomed to, and a great saving to them of their scanty earnings. They consume but a very small quantity at a time of the meat they thus acquire ; the remainder is cut up into small bits, and, being tied to a peace of twine, is hung up in the sun to dry, after which process

it lasts them for many days. A small donation of rice after a long march is also very acceptable.

I always found that I got on much better with the natives by mild, kind, and considerate treatment than by the harsh measures generally adopted by all classes of Europeans towards them: one line of conduct is appreciated, while the other, at all times grating to the feelings of men whatever their colour, only serves as incentives to misbehaviour, mistrust and revenge.

The natives have it always in their power to annoy and to vex, in retaliation for ill-treatment experienced at the hands of their employers; and, whenever they observe an inclination on their parts to bully or use them unkindly in any way, they instantly adopt a mode of behaviour, notwithstanding their servile looks and humble manner, which often-times proves not only extremely inconvenient but dangerous.

The reader must kindly excuse these concluding remarks. I have made them more with a view to advise my young friends how to act towards their humble servitors, men whose subsistence, as well as that of their large families, depends upon their own labour entirely, and who undergo hardships innumerable to gain a precarious livelihood, even from "the crumbs which fall from their master's table," and who, if treated kindly, will prove themselves faithful slaves; and if otherwise, will

turn out to be inveterate in their hatred and implacable in their revenge.

When I say *natives*, I mean taking the poorer classes collectively, not any particular individuals or castes, but as a whole, be they at their own homes or in the field. The new-comer may rely on it that kind treatment towards all with whom he may become connected will be found to be the best and most convenient policy to adopt; certainly it is much more respectable, much more manly, and much more in accordance with every principle of professing Christians; and where is the Englishman who would tamely submit to be dealt with as the natives of India often are? The very brutes that perish are not so treated.

Is it not a disgrace to our countrymen, (who consider themselves a nation peculiarly alive to all the feelings of honour and charity,) that such things should go on unpunished, unnoticed, in a land too from whence we derive so many benefits and comforts; a country placed in our hands by the all-wise arrangement of a merciful and gracious Providence, as a dispensation of His goodness towards us, a precious talent committed to our charge?

Is it a right way of showing our gratitude for such blessings, to ill-treat and tyrannize over the helpless inhabitants of that country? Nay, rather ought we not to try and evince our thankfulness by endeavouring to make all things work together

for their good, by proving to them by precept and example as well as conciliating behaviour, that we are Christians not in name only but in deed and in truth? Are not the natives of India, high and low, rich and poor, people of like form and fashion as ourselves? Then why should we ill-treat man, or woman, who are made after God's own image, and are equally his creatures?

Earnestly do I hope that these words of advice may sink into the memory of such as may be destined in after-life to become wanderers in India's sultry clime, so that both themselves and the oppressed natives may profit from my experience. My readers will only have to appeal to others, and, if they do not agree with me in the justice of these remarks, I shall be very much mistaken. I know that our honourable masters at home have issued strict and serious orders, directing that persons ill-treating the natives shall be severly punished, and our local governments have, in accordance with those orders, taken precautionary steps towards their being carried into active operation; but how many instances are there daily occurring in men's houses, in the field, in the town, in the village,—everywhere, which, if noticed, would bring condign punishment upon the heads of the offenders?

Our good folks in England know not of the goings-on in India. To maltreat a native is considered a meritorious act, and the younger branches

of the service think it very fine and manly to curse and swear at them, kick and buffet them, and behave in such a manner that, if it were known, the most serious consequences would be the result. I am sorry to say that many who ought to set a better example to the younger are just as bad, some of them worse; and those who ought to interfere with their authority to check such proceedings, take no steps to prevent the same.

Let us hope, however that, in accordance with the improvement which is so visibly taking place in the moral and religious principles of all circles of society, the conduct of our countrymen towards the poor unprotected, unoffending natives of the lower grades, will likewise undergo reform, and that, instead of maltreatment, we shall ere long behold them extending the hand of sympathy and Christian kindness, moderating their demeanour towards them with manly forbearance, and showing to the ignorant yet feeling natives of India, how good a thing it is for the superior to protect the inferior, and how degrading it is to Christians to infringe that law of charity which bids us "do unto others as we would that they should do unto us."

## CHAPTER II.

Bangalore—Early Development of the young Sabaltern's Character—The intercepted Present—The Cantonment and Fort—The Clergy—Want of Churches—Preference of Officers for Bangalore—A Grand Cricket Match—Religious Prejudices of the Native Troops—Effects of the Sun on Griffins—Horses and Horse-dealers—Bangalore Races—Encamping Ground—Nuisance of red sand-dust—Tents not the most secure Habitations when the wind blows—Bushing—Runaway Lascar-Servant—Observations on domestic Management.

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WE arrived, without any extraordinary occurrence, at Bangalore, having been on the road for about a month, and, taking all things into consideration, after a very pleasant march thus far. I do not remember ever having been happier. True is it circumstances sometimes did happen to vex me, yet after all they were trivial, and then I was nothing more nor less than a downright greenhorn ; and what person is there bearing that designation, or having that character, who can make his first march without encountering a multiplicity of difficulties.

A young man's first journey with a body of troops is a capital school for the commencement of life. Whatever his character may be, quiet and sober; mild and temperate; or riotous and dissipated; passionate and quarrelsome; his qualities soon become developed, and his comrades invariably demean themselves towards him accordingly.

To hoax and laugh at a new-comer are the delight of the oldsters; but if the latter find out, that, in spite of his griffinish tricks and inexperienced blunders, he is at all events a really gentlemanly lad, possessing many good qualities, giving evidence of future improvement, and a promise of his turning out an acquisition to their small circle; and, if they see that he is, moreover, good-tempered, and takes all the jokes of his comrades in a kindly part; that he proves himself, though a boy, still a manly fellow; he very soon becomes a favourite with the rest; is treated as an equal; admitted into their brotherhood; and looked upon as one of themselves.

But, if the new arrival proves himself to be the contrary to all this and shows a disposition to be litigious, or quarrelsome, he is treated in such a manner that his very existence must be a burthen to him. A young man then, finds his own level. If he joins a conceited vain puppy, overflowing with self-importance, he is very soon brought to his bearings, and made to understand that his vanity

will avail him nothing in his intercourse with his brother officers.

I am, however, glad to say, that such specimens are rarities, and the youths of the present day are well-bred, gentlemanly lads, though we do occasionally meet with strange characters, whom it is indeed matter of the greatest difficulty to shape into the form and bearing of an officer, and who require to be ruled with the iron rod of military severity, before they can be tamed into and shaped like any thing resembling a soldier.

On a line of march, a young officer has many opportunities of learning useful lessons. The very mode of living, of moving every day, of having to shift and act for himself, and the being able to observe and notice what and how his older comrades do for themselves; all this soon puts him on the alert, and a very, very few days' practice makes him perfect; and, as the eyes of all the older hands are directed towards and fixed upon every new arrival to observe what kind of an addition he may prove to the regiment, his what-is and what-is-to-be are quickly known, and he is put down in their opinions as being a proper sort of a fellow, or as one who is likely to prove no ornament to their fraternity.

There are always older officers in a regiment, ready and willing to take by the hand any young lad recently joined, and, as I remarked in a former chapter, he should never be ashamed to seek advice

or aid when he really finds that he cannot from ignorance act for himself; but, if by means of his own perception and abilities, he is able to get on by himself, he should act the part of an independent man, without making a confidant of any one, or letting a soul know what he would do, and what he would not.

But we must now get ourselves into Bangalore. Let the above digression be supposed to have been made as we moved off the road, and halted about two or three miles from the station, where the good old colonel had stopped for a short while, just for the purpose of brushing up a bit, and doing every thing in proper style, to let the good folks there know that the gallant —'s were as fine a body of men as ever marched into that cantonment to the tune of "*Rule Britannia*" in quick time.

While halted as above mentioned, I chanced to observe a native trudging along the road with a basket slung at each end of a bamboo, which he carried across his shoulders. Seeing him coming as if from the cantonments, I thought it probable that he might have been sent out by a friend to some one of our officers in camp; I therefore made no hesitation in stopping the fellow, and being at the time on foot proceeded "*sans cérémonie*" to open the said baskets, or hampers, when, to my delight and astonishment, I discovered a goodly supply of

fresh vegetables, and, what are far better, some ripe peaches, plums, and apples.

Without inquiring as to whom they belonged, or for whom they were intended, I immediately attacked the fruit, putting whole peaches into my mouth, and pocketing the apples by dozens ! The poor cooly looked on aghast ; then cried out in broken English, " Ish-tap, sar ! Ish-tap, sar ! I poor man, sar ! What for master do that ? No musht yeat the yapples ! Them not master roan ! Ish-tap, sar ! I bringee from Bunglore, from Cornol Wome garden ! One present for Master Regmunt Cornel ! Ish-tap sar ! No eat more, sar ! What master bout ?"

" Hold your tongue, you villain !" cried I, with my mouthfull, " don't mention the colonel to me, I don't know of such a person ! Here, take a rupee and run back to the front of the column, you will find the colonel there ! Why do you bring them to me, sir ? I am not the colonel ! Take them away, take them away."

" What I know, sar ?" said the poor fellow ; " Master make halt for me, wopen my bushket, and take em out all the feeches, the fullums, and the yapples, and make eat fast ; what I can say nor ? I go, sar, make put em back more yapples ; sar ! I foor man, sar, salam, sar. I go sar."

And, taking my proffered coin very gladly, he trudged back to the head of the column, where,

seated on a bank, was our gallant colonel, who received the poor gardener, and examined the contents of the baskets. The latter kept his counsel, and the former was not a bit the wiser ; so much for my rupee. At breakfast in the tent, the present was displayed on the table, and I must confess I felt a secret delight, when I saw that I had eaten the best peaches and plums and apples that were sent. The colonel very politely offered me some, which, in common civility, I could not refuse. I remember telling him this anecdote several years after ; he replied, that he always suspected I had played him the trick on the occasion.

I may as well here observe that Bangalore, being above the Ghauts, is much colder than the lower country. The English fruit and vegetables thrive there to perfection. The residents have beautiful gardens in which they cultivate these luxuries ; some of the fruit, &c. being equally as good as that in our own dear country, reminding them of the delightful summers at home, and enjoying what their friends cannot in the sultry plains of the Carnatic.

The cantonment of Bangalore is a very extensive one, widely scattered, but at the same time laid out in regular lines of houses, which are in general well built and compact, with enclosures, or compounds, according to the size of the dwellings. Many of the houses are large, and the rooms have fire-places,

in consequence of the cold during certain months of the year. The appearance of the cantonment from the rising ground outside is certainly very pretty; the substantial buildings, the neatly trimmed hedges, the well made roads, and the church peeping out from among the trees, the soldiers' quarters and other barracks, and public stores, all form a striking picture to the eye of the stranger.

There is a large force maintained here, composed of horse-artillery, dragoons and native cavalry, foot artillery, European and native infantry, sappers and miners, and so on, intended chiefly to hold the Mysoreans in check, for at this distant period there is still an ill feeling on the part of the Moslems, the old followers of the great Sultan Tippoo, against the British government; and the "pettah" (or native suburbs) is swarming with the dissolute and discontented, as are also the neighbouring cities of Seringapatam and Mysore, &c.

Bangalore is the head-quarters of a division of the Madras army, the general commanding and all his staff, besides many other officials, residing there; the society therefore is large, and the place is considered one of the gayest in the whole Presidency, with plenty of balls and parties, racing and so on; every arrangement is made and much money expended for the worldly amusements of the residents, and every new arrival pronounces Bangalore to be one of the best stations in the whole country.

The clergy, as is the case throughout India, are very few in number. Where so many European troops, exclusively of the officers and their families, are congregated, it is a great pity that there are not more chaplains; as it is, the present incumbent has to do three, if not four, duties every Sunday, without any assistance except from his curate, or some one passing through. In addition, he has to attend the schools, and visit the European hospitals as well as perform the several other duties of his calling.

And now I have mentioned the clergy, I may as well say a few words regarding them, not, however, in any way intended as presumption on my part in arguing counter to the arrangements of my superiors, but merely to show how few labourers there are a-field where "the harvest is so truly plentiful," particularly in the East. In the whole of the Madras Presidency, comprising an extent of country from Nagpore down to Cape Comorin, and reaching across from East to West of nearly the whole of Southern India, there are not actually more than thirty clergymen, that is to say, in the pay of the Honourable Company. Even this scanty number is diminished by some being away from their duties on furlough to Europe, or elsewhere; their absence leaving a station for many months without any minister at all.

The different religious societies in our own land,

have sent out missionaries into all parts of India, and there are many scattered over our Presidency, but they have a peculiar duty to perform, and have nothing to do with the large stations where there are troops. Their labours are entirely devoted to the conversion of the native heathens of the country, and the chaplains of the service seldom or never have an opportunity of benefiting by their assistance, so that we cannot derive any advantages by their being in the country. The missionaries are generally located in the native towns and villages; they are consequently seldom found in our garrisons, or cantonments, where the presence of a clergyman is a matter of rare occurrence.

At many of our stations there is not such a building even as a church, whilst the Papists invariably have some place of worship. The consequences are, that we seldom see the inside of a church, or hear the joyful sounds of God's Holy Word from the lips of a divine! This is a sad thing, and shows in glaring colours how much worldly matters occupy the thoughts of man, and how little attention is paid to the things which make for our peace, and how little care is given to the honour and praise of Him from whom all blessings flow.

Now, a chaplain in India is very well paid indeed. He receives a salary treble in amount, if not more, to what he would do in England, where he is obliged to keep a curate to assist him in his

duties. With such a handsome income as he receives monthly, why does he not keep a curate in India, also? Or, why does not government curtail this high pay, and send out more chaplains; surely, it can be done. And it would be a better plan which would give our stations (where there are no chaplains) each one, and the larger two or more; and, instead of our government spending enormous sums of money in useless buildings, why not erect a church or a chapel at each station for the benefit of their servants?

How many deserted cantonments are there all over India, where the buildings which had cost thousands and thousands of rupees are going to ruin and decay! Why should not these be pulled down and the materials removed to the nearest stations, and churches erected from them? The brick-work, the iron-work and fixtures could be removed on bullocks, or carts, and would all prove more or less useful. The pulling-down part of the business would not cost much if government-people were to be employed, and surely the undertaking would meet with its final reward, for what a delightful thing it is for Christians in a foreign land to go with joyful steps to the House of God, instead of desecrating His sabbaths, as many are at present doing at most places where no churches exist, by never even giving the Almighty a single thought? Would not the simple ringing of the church-bell

remind the careless, thoughtless youth of a duty to perform.

And would not the very circumstance of a clergyman residing amongst us have a beneficial effect, and tell us that we have other things to think of besides our military duties and the pleasures and dissipation of the mess-room? The want of clergy in India is the bane of many a young man. The salutary advice in private, or the timely warning voice from the pulpit, may tend to check many in their career of sin and wickedness; to encourage the desponding, and strengthen such as are already looking to the Author and finisher of their faith. The absence of such men from amongst us is, indeed, a matter of deep regret, and I trust and pray that God will, in His own good time, put it into the hearts of our rulers to "send forth more labourers to the harvest."

There is a tolerably large fort at Bangalore, in which the military stores are kept, and where the public offices of the force are held. It was formerly the scene of much bloodshed and slaughter. Tippoo with his train of one hundred pieces of artillery, played upon its walls, and, had it not been for the gallantry and dashing behaviour of our troops, he would probably have succeeded in battering down the defences; but his guns were attacked and carried at the point of the bayonet. Tippoo and his troops were routed, and the whole of

his splendid train of ordnance, camp and material fell into our hands. The site where the sultaun fixed this enormous battery is still pointed out to the traveller by the many veterans, both Europeans and natives who reside at Bangalore, though there are now no vestiges or marks of the field-works he constructed.

Our old European soldiers are very partial to Bangalore. They have been known to volunteer from one regiment to another three or four different times, to be able to remain in India in preference to going home. They live very comfortably, draw their pensions, which are ample for their own subsistence as well as for that of their families, and appear to be perfectly contented with their lot in life.

It is usually those attached to native women, who remain in India; men with European wives generally return to England. I have known very few instances of the latter giving India the preference ; there are connexions and associations which draw them to their own country, whereas the being united to females of colour with large families acts as a restraint, though many instances are known wherein European soldiers have deserted their wives and children, and gone away without them, never intending to return.

These pensioners are, however, considered very troublesome people, for they are much addicted to

drinking, and are the means of corrupting the young soldiery, and making them intoxicated, after which the poor lads are turned out of their houses, and are invariably taken up by the patrols and punished the next morning. I have heard that the veterans at Bangalore are a particularly troublesome set. I hope they will reform one of these days, for an *old* soldier with a *bad* character is a disgrace to the profession.

I do not think that any of the officers of the force reside inside the fort; indeed, the place must be too hot to induce any people to prefer the interior to the exterior, though some of the conductors of ordnance may have quarters, not from choice, but from necessity.

The good folks at Bangalore, hearing of our characters as cricketers, a challenge was sent us, and arrangements made for a match between the eleven of H. M.'s —th foot and ourselves; but this challenge was taking us at a disadvantage, for many of our best players were away with the "*left-wing*;" we were, therefore, badly off, though our lads were game to the backbone, and eager for the trial. Two of the best bats from among the officers volunteered, and were taken in for want of better, to make up our eleven. Tents were pitched, the ground marked out, and the wickets placed by knowing hands, umpires selected, and scorers told off, all very proper.

Our men were nothing daunted, although they were much out of practice; they had never before played against Europeans, and their present antagonists, they were informed, were first-rate players. All the cantonment turned out to see such a novelty, viz., that of natives of India playing at that true English game; and it was a sight worth seeing, too; the whole ground was covered with European and native soldiery from the different corps in the place, besides ladies and gentlemen spectators, for whose accommodation tents were pitched and refreshments laid out by the mess of the gallant regiment to whom we were opposed.

The game was played very fairly and with great spirit, though it was evident to all present that the advantage was on the side of the Europeans. The first day's result was, however, in favour of our men, notwithstanding their want of practice. That of the second day was against us, which made the match in every way a drawn one, and both parties separated highly satisfied with each other, the Europeans in great glee, and our lads so excited that they declared, had the "*left-wing*" been present, there would have been no difficulty in giving the "*soger logue*," (the soldier-people,) a thorough good drubbing. We were to have played the dragoons, but we left Bangalore before a match could be got up.

It was highly amusing to mark the behaviour of

our gallant countrymen towards their darker comrades on this occasion. Not knowing the customs of the natives, the men had prepared a kind of collation with plenty of drink, to be partaken of by the sepoys as well as themselves. The soldiers came up to our men as soon as the game was over, and, slapping them on the back, one of them said :—

“ Come along, boys, and take a bit of something to eat and a glass of beer !”

“ No, sār ! no can eat, no drink ! Salam, sār, no can do that ;” replied a havildar of ours.

“ Arrah, honey !” exclaimed an Irish grenadier, “ we'll take no excuse ; and by the piper that played before Moses, ye shall have a raal drop of the cratur, too ! come along !”

“ No, sār ! I Hindoo mans ! I neber drink ! I lose caste 'spose I take the rack ; that no good for me !”

“ Well, thin, lave the drink ! Come in and take something to eat ; do that now, there's a darlint, Jack Sapay that ye are !”

No, sār ! salam, sār ! Main Mussulman hoon : nahin kā sukta !\* no, sār !”

“ Is it *ka sukta* do you say ? Well, thin I don't know what that manes, its gibberish to me ! Will ye take a cheroot, thin ?”

“ Master sodger give cheroot, I take and make smoke ; but no can eat, no can drink !”

\* “ I am a Mussulman, I am not able to eat.”

"But ye are all a queer set of fishes, that ye are!" exclaimed the disappointed soldier. "By the butt-end of my Brown-Bess, what is it that ye will do?"

"We go whome!" replied a Sepoy; "go to camp. Roll-call feade got,\* we go, sār, salam, sār, salam!"

And away they went; thus ending the colloquy which I myself overheard. The sepoys were not accustomed to such instances of true English hospitality, and their caste prejudices prevented their eating and drinking with our gallant countrymen; this I explained to the soldiers, and the Irishman remarked:

"Bad luck to them, say I! There's as fine a roasted sheep in that there tint, as ever y'er honor would wish to dine off, with plenty of raal good pratis! Do ye think, sir, that they sapays would eat it, if we sind the whole up to the camp?"

"No, not a bit of it," replied I; "they would most probably think it an insult, particularly after having once refused."

"Ah, you have a queer set to deal with, your honour!" said one of the party.

"You may say that, my man," rejoined I; "but never mind, do you eat the mutton yourselves; and here is something to wash it down with, and to drink the healths of your sable-faced fellow-sol-

\* Roll-call parade.

diars!" I put five rupees into the hands of one of the men, and walked away.

"Thank ye, y'er honour," called out Paddy; we'll do that same, and wish you long life and happiness, sir!" and, touching their caps, they marched off in high glee to spend the five rupees, and I was informed the next day, that two or three soldiers were taken up drunk by the night patrol. I suppose they must have had "*a wee drap in the e'e*," in drinking the healths of "*Jack Sapay*."

When I arrived at Bangalore, I was in a sad plight. The exposure to the sun had worked wonders with my smooth face and fair complexion. The whole was one mass of blister and *scarification*; the skin was peeling off in large flakes, and my poor nose was one great angry-looking thing, as if I had put it into the fire. I was quite horrified to look at my self in the glass, and dreaded the thoughts of visiting several lady acquaintances in the place.

Others had suffered also, but I was worse. Griffins always get touched up by the sun more or less, and there is no remedy for it but time; some recommend butter, some salve, others this and that: but all these precautions are of no avail; the sun will convince foreigners that they are nearer to him in India than in their own country, and this he does by most convincing proofs of his powers.

On a line of march, when the young beginners are out in the heat day after day, without any shelter, save that of their tents, and then only for a short period, it is not at all to be wondered at that they suffer, and more, as a matter of course, than those accustomed to it; there is no remedy for the evil, and the only way to manage is to let the skin come off by itself, and not pick and pull it as I did, thereby creating large sores, which are not only inconvenient and painful, but disfiguring.

I remember visiting a lady the day after our arrival. She stared in amazement at sight of me, and did not actually recognise me until some time after I had been in the room. Thinking that she would administer relief to my poor face, she hastily ran into her boudoir and brought out a bottle of "Eau de Cologne," with which she wetted the corner of her "*mouchoir de poche*," and applied it to my nasal organ! The effect may be better imagined than described; I roared with the pain, and was glad to run away and plunge my head into a basin of cold water. Any thing having spirits in it is the worst application that can be put to a half-broiled skin.

But let us turn to some more interesting subject than burnt faces and blistered noses. I merely mentioned it for the information and guidance of smooth-faced griffins, who, when they are in the sun, fancy themselves in England, where Sol can do them

but trifling harm, and consequently expose themselves to his influence, little thinking of the dangers they incur by such rashness, and never taking precautions to guard against them until they find themselves as severely (if not more so) handled as I was.

Bangalore is famous for the large periodical supplies of horses, which are brought thither by Arab dealers. Many of my readers may remember Curreem Khan, the celebrated horse-dealer. He made an enormous sum of money, but did not long live to enjoy it in his own country, having died of cholera while at Madras, to which place he had gone to dispose of a batch of horses recently arrived.

The horses are generally landed on the western coast at Mangalore ; they are then marched across to the Mysore country, where they remain for a time, and then wend their way down to the Presidency. They are brought, for the most part, from the Persian Gulf and Bombay for the Madras market. The arrival at Bangalore of a fresh batch always sets the dragoon and native cavalry-officers on the qui vive, and the sporting community, likewise, are on the look out for a good bit of horseflesh for racing, or pig-sticking ; so that for the most part, the dealers contrive to dispose of their best cattle before proceeding further.

The ground on which we were pitched was contiguous to the dealers' stables, and every day from

morning to night we were amused by seeing the horses brought out for the inspection of some fresh purchaser; it not unfrequently occurred, that one or two would break loose and gallop about the encampment, to the great terror of all the old women and children in the corps. One brute, I remember in particular, got loose and rushed into our mess-tent, where he received more empty bottles and other missiles than he bargained for, to say nothing of the cudgelling administered by means of bamboos and walking-sticks.

The famous Bangalore races occur once every year. The course is a very fine one, well laid out and properly managed. The stand is a handsome building. All the connoisseurs in the mysteries of jockeyism flock to Bangalore on these occasions, obtaining leave from their regiments and employments for the express purpose. The races are well contested, some of the best horses in India being brought into the field. Large sums of money are staked, lost and won, and matters are conducted in a style that would do credit to Ascot, and Epsom.

Our encampment being situated on high ground, we were exposed to the full force of a very disagreeable wind, which blew with unceasing violence during the whole period of our stay there. The soil, of a reddish hue, made matters worse; for the small dust, or sand, was blown upon us and everything we had, so as to render remaining in our

tents aught but pleasant. As for them, they completely changed colour, looking as if they had actually been dyed red; clothes, furniture, faces and hair, all partaking of the same fiery appearance.

The wind blew with such force that my tent (as well as those of others) was blown completely down, and that more than once. Bushing the ropes was of no avail, for the wind tore up every thing; and, as for the small tents or pals of the poor families, it was no uncommon thing to see three or four of them flying up in the air like so many balloons, the women shrieking with alarm at the thoughts of losing so valuable an appendage to their marching establishments.

By the way, what I mean by the word *bushing* is simply this, holes are dug about a foot or so deep, at a short distance, say a yard, in front of each tent-peg; in these holes are placed strong tolerably sized boughs of trees, and to these boughs are fastened the tent-ropes, thereby rendering the immediate play of the ropes less than if there were no boughs at all. These auxiliaries (if I may call them such) give an additional purchase, as it were, and, if they were not added to the pegs on occasions such as the one I am now alluding to, the force of the wind and the swaying to and fro of the canvass on its pole, would tear up the pegs in a moment, and the tent would either fall to the

ground, or be carried up in the air, and be flapped into a thousand shreds in a very short time.

My rogue of a lascar was drunk every day while at Bangalore; the consequences were that my tent was never attended to, and I suffered accordingly. I threatened him with dismissal from my employment as a debauched drunkard, but he saved me that trouble, for he took himself off one fine day and I was thankful enough too, for a more determined arrack-drinker I never saw. I very soon secured the services of another man in his place, and a fortunate exchange it was, for the ci-devant was in very truth a sore thorn in my side.

The fellow had some pay due to him, which however he did not dare to come and ask for, knowing well that if he made his appearance he would taste plentifully of the rod which I had in pickle for him at the police-office. With the runaway lascar's pay, I laid in a good stock of fresh tent-pegs, and gave the remainder to some poor, half-starved, miserable wretches, who were mendicanting in our camp from morning to night.

One dreadful storm I shall never forget. My pegs were not bushed as usual, and about ten o'clock it came on to rain and blow most furiously. I was on my cot fast asleep, when presently I was roused from my slumbers by hearing a loud noise resembling thunder, which made me fancy all sorts

of things. This proved to be one corner of my tent, which had got loose, and was flapping about famously ; presently, the whole fabrique came down with a crash ! The pole fell straight across my cot, without however doing me any damage ; and I should most probably have been smothered in the wet folds of the canvass, or had my back broken by the pole, had I not fortunately slipped off my cot, and taken shelter underneath it. As it was, I got wet through to the skin, and should have fared but badly, had I not taken refuge in my fellow griffin's tent for the rest of the night.

It is indeed a dangerous thing to omit bushing the tent overnight, for there is no knowing (such visitations are so sudden) when it may come on to blow, and you are turned out of your warm bed into the cold and wet, and get well nigh smothered into the bargain ; and all this merely from neglecting to do what would not take more than half an hour altogether. Tents, therefore, should be well bushed ; the tent-pegs should be knocked well into the ground, the storm and other ropes hauled well taught, and a water-course, or gutter, dug all round, so as to carry off all that falls from the upper fly, otherwise the occupant is certain of having a watery visitation, and his boots, shoes, the bottoms of boxes and portmanteaus saturated and spoiled. These important duties devolve upon the lascar, but, unless he is made to attend to them,

he is sure to neglect them, either forgetting, or, through absolute laziness, omitting it *in toto*.

Native servants will invariably find some absurd excuse for dereliction of duty; and, when once let off for such, they are so unable to appreciate leniency, or kindness, that they become as troublesome as possible, and are as bad as the servants are at home, who are famous for verifying the old saying about "giving an inch and taking an ell." On a line of march, in particular, it is necessary that a master should preserve a due authority, treating his servants with consideration, though making them do their work to the letter. If a domestic sees that his master is a determined, strict, though kind man, he will fear and at the same time respect him; but, when he detects anything derogatory to his situation as his master, then the quick perception of the Indian marks it as too good an opportunity to be lost, and demeans himself accordingly, robbery and knavery being often the principal parts of the game he is playing; he becomes insolent, snaps his fingers at his master, and eventually decamps with a portion of his kit, silver things and all.

Servants in India of all classes, be they butlers, cooks, maity-boys, or tent-lascars, horsekeepers or grasscutters, or in fact anybody, must be dealt with in most rigid discipline, and then all will go right, but diverge from that, then farewell to peace and com-

fort. The master must keep himself in his own place; if so, the servants will know theirs; if they do not, they must be punished; but, if once there is a laxity in the discipline of the house, then, as I said before, farewell to every comfort, and farewell authority, and farewell to property also. There is nothing like good wholesome discipline even in one's own house.

## CHAPTER III.

Departure from Bangalore—Fatigues of the March—The cold Weather—Importance of attaching the Native Troops—Meeting old Friends—A Storm in Camp—Its ludicrous Consequences—Nakennairy Pass—Descent into the Carnatic—Curious Anecdote respecting Tippoo Sultaun.

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AFTER resting for five days, we again broke ground and finally quitted Bangalore, in continuation of our journey towards our destination. I was beginning to be heartily tired of moving, and longed to reach the end of our march. The having to be in one constant state of bustle and excitement, was very tiresome, and the sameness of every-day occurrence was wearying to me. Our cattle, too, were beginning to evince signs of fatigue by losing flesh, from daily labour and bad feeding, and our men also were complaining of being badly off for the wherewithal to prosecute their route.

To obviate this last drawback, however, we had a supply of money given us at Bangalore, and that

was of the greatest assistance to all parties. We had discharged our bullocks, and hired carts or bandies in lieu, so that our movements were more rapid, and there was not that lagging behind of our baggage that we complained so much of before. So as far as means were concerned, we lacked nothing; yet still was the whole a vexatious business altogether, very trying to the patience, and very harassing. However, we had not much further to go. The 30th of June would find us at the end of our journey, and we hoped to remain quiet and stationary for three years at least.

The weather was very cold indeed at Bangalore, and continued so until we descended the Ghauts. When we turned out of a morning at three o'clock, the wind blew bitterly upon us, and both officers and men shivered and chattered as if they were half frozen. I had no idea that it would be so chilly, and was always glad to wrap myself up in my cloak and stand by a fire until we moved, and then I used to march on foot almost the whole way, to keep myself from tumbling off my horse, for the cold used to make me as sleepy as possible. A hot cup of tea, or coffee, with a spoonful of good brandy in it, and a bit of dry toast, are capital preparations for a cold morning in India, after which, the warmth of a good Manilla cigar is really very comforting to the inner man. But, as I before said, smoking early in the morning generally creates nausea, and it is as well to avoid that if possible.

The cold sharp air of the country through which we were passing was, however, very healthy and bracing, and was, doubtless, most beneficial to us all. We were in excellent health, having about six men on the sick report, and three were old ulcer cases, brought with us from Mangalore. The exercise of walking eight or ten miles every morning did me a vast deal of good. I enjoyed that part of the business considerably, and, when I arrived in camp, I had the appetite of a horse.

While thus walking, I would move between the sections of my own company, listening to the yarns spun, and conversing with and making remarks to the men as we trudged along. This the brave fellows liked very much, and they were always pleased when they saw me coming amongst them. I never once met with an instance of disrespect, nor did I ever feel myself lowered, in my own opinion, in the eyes of my men.

I hold it as an excellent plan for the officer to go amongst his men when fitting opportunity offers, and there are many. He becomes acquainted with them, and they with him; and where is there anything derogatory in an officer making himself known to those under his command? There cannot possibly be any harm done, and much good will decidedly result therefrom. Many a hearty laugh have I had while thus marching with my sipahees, and many a joke have I cracked with them, too. I recall these incidents often to

my mind, and look back to those days with feelings of pleasure.

It is a long time now since I last marched with my men; but, whenever there was anything to be done in the way of duty, when the ranks were formed, and military discipline required, then the matter was changed entirely. The men knew me well, and, young as I then was, I flatter myself they feared as well as respected me. When I became the company-officer, all familiarity was at an end and forgotten in the rigid discipline and demeanour of the well-trained soldier. But I beg the reader will exonerate me from any charge of egotism, my object simply being to impress on the young reader how necessary a thing it is for good feeling and good understanding to exist between the officer and his men; how useful it will be to him in the hour of need; and how requisite it is for the former, though on good terms with the latter, to keep up his rank, station and consequence amongst them.

I do not set myself forth as a solitary instance of having steered a right course in connexion with my men. I have simply followed the good example set by others, far better and more intelligent men than my humble self; men who have been in the same service, and commanded the same description of soldiers. It was in following those examples that I happily contrived to be always on good terms

with those under me; and it is to those very examples that I would so earnestly point the attention of my youthful soldiers, in the sincere hope that they will be guided by what I say. I am not the only man who has marched on foot along with his company; I am not the only man who has laughed and cracked jokes with his men; and I am not the only man who has been strict when duty calls. Others have done the same, and earnestly do I wish that all would pursue the same course.

I firmly believe that if there were to be a better understanding between officers and men, there would not be half the disturbances, the mutinies, the desertions, the courts-martials, the everything that is objectionable amongst our native soldiery. No! The officers consider that they lower themselves by associating with their men. They think it *infra dignitatem* to be seen conversing with them, except at orderly hour, or on the parade-ground. Who, in the name of all that is military, should, if the officers do not? If they hold themselves aloof from their men, how can the one have any regard for the other?

The very dogs which crouch at their feet love their masters, because theirs are the hands which feed and caress them; if, therefore, *the brutes that perish* have the sagacity of possessing and evincing affection towards those who treat them well, does it not stand to reason that man, with feelings and

senses as keen and as acute as our own, will show the same, if not greater, regard and esteem? And *vice versa*, if a poor dumb dog is maltreated in any one way, does not the animal mistrust his master's after-caresses?

And is it not the same with man? How can an officer expect to be followed and backed by his men in the time of trial and danger before the enemy, if that officer is not liked or known by his men? Who is it that enables the officer to distinguish himself in action, but the humble and brave soldier that fights by his side? But, if that officer despises the common soldier, will the latter love him and be faithful to him, or defend the life of his superior at the risk of his own? Oh, no! It would be folly to expect it. But to our march.

On arriving one morning at a halting-place called Bait-mungulum, we found the travellers' bungalow occupied by a party of officers on a shooting excursion. They belonged to the Queen's regiment, stationed at Bangalore; and, upon inquiry, I ascertained that two of them were old friends of mine, my quondam shipmates, of happy memory, on the voyage out from England; boys at that time, but now much altered, and very pleasant fellows to boot.

I was rejoiced to see them once more, and had a very pleasant chat with them of by-gone days, which caused many a laugh, when we called to

mind our doings on board the old W—— H——, and more particularly the narrow escape we had when the boat was found half full of water without a plug in its bottom, and the sharks following in our wake. I invited my friends to dine with me in the mess-tent the day following, as we were to halt in the usual manner.

We sat down next day a merry party at dinner, but somehow or other everything seemed to go wrong at the meal. The meat was tough, and as raw as possible; the soup was smoked; the rice not half boiled; the beer and wines as hot as if they had been standing by the fire; and the water as muddy as it could well be. All this was very vexatious, and made our old colonel very grumpy, indeed.

I felt disconcerted not a little, though my poor guests took all in good part, making allowances in a gentlemanly way for the want of means for good cooking on a line of march. The wine and beer, though hot, were, however, of the very best, and liquor being the principal ingredient at a mess table, things went on tolerably well.

But the above désagrémens were nothing to what followed shortly after; 'twas the climax to all our disasters. We had been at table for about an hour, when a violent storm arose of wind and rain, accompanied by thunder and lightning, and the water came down in torrents. The force of

the wind was such, that in a very short space of time after the commencement, the tent-pegs, which had not been bushed, were forced out, and the storm-ropes snapping, down came the tent upon us, a huge mass of wet heavy cloth, sufficient to smother us all. Fortunately, there was no damage done, saving the smashing of sundry plates and glasses.

The colonel, being rather slow in his movements, consequent on an attack of the gout (to which he was subject), could not scramble out of his chair in time to get away, and, had I not been close to him at the moment, I do believe the poor old gentlemen would have been suffocated; as it happened, however, I seized hold of his large walking-stick, and, by dint of much exertion, contrived to raise the wet cloth from off him until he was able to move, and creep under the table, where he was safe, and whither I, as well as the rest of us, took refuge.

It was indeed an amusing sight, when we had daylight, to behold the unhappy-looking group under the table, almost every one having his own special bottle of wine under his arm, hugging it most affectionately; and, when the ruins of the tent were removed, and the prisoners in durance vile liberated, the laugh that our awkward position created was truly great.

All enjoyed the fun except the colonel, who was very much out of humour, and not until after he

had been well coaxed could he be brought into a proper train. He vowed vengeance upon the lancers, for having neglected the important operation of bushing ; and it was ever after a standing joke in the camp, when the colonel was inquired for by anybody, to say, "He is bushing the tents !" And to be sure he never would rest until he saw that every peg had its corresponding prop, in the shape of a good strong bough.

On the occasion above alluded to, the risible faculties of the whole party were excited by the circumstance of one of our ensigns' dogs running about under the table and taking, or rather attempting to take, a bite at our legs ; the brute was half killed when we got at him, and would doubtless have been beaten to death, had not his master taken him up in his arms, for which act of kindness the cur gave his preserver an affectionate nip, which induced him to throw the brute down howling with the pain.

This was a very unpleasant occurrence indeed for my friends, and I felt anything but comfortable at the idea of their having had a bad dinner, and such a finale to the feast ; nothing to eat, and a ducking into the bargain ! However, the mess-tent being, as it were, *hors de combat*, we all adjourned to mine, where we had a merry evening, beguiling the time as well as we could by songs, smoking and drinking, and finishing with a nice hot supper

at about eleven o'clock at night. What a jovial life we soldiers lead ! Who would not be a soldier ?

In course of time, we came to the well known Nakennairy Pass, at which place we began to descend. The ghaut, or pass, is steep, though the road is excellent, and considerably wider than roads usually are. The scenery at this part of our journey has something in it beautifully picturesque, and I may say grand. On our right, we beheld high hills in irregular forms, exhibiting a variety of rocky chasms, deep gullies and towering cliffs, covered with thick jungle and large trees. On the left the eye meets a series of deep valleys, prettily variegated here and there with sheets of water, thick clusters of trees, romantic glens and woody dingles; the old Bangalore road winding through, and showing its rugged ruins from amongst the thick brushwood that covered the surface of the ground.

In front, the eye rests upon the extensive plains of the Carnatic, interspersed here and there with small ranges of hills, dry beds of rivers, and water-courses, well cultivated paddy-fields, and broad patches of forest land, but the whole has an arid, parched-up appearance, nothing to be compared in general aspect of picturesque beauty to the country we had but recently traversed, and which was cer-

tainly far superior to that upon which we were now about to descend.

Mentioning the Nakennairy Pass reminds me of a strange story I once heard, but upon the truth of which I was rather inclined to be sceptical. Whether any of my Oriental readers ever heard it, or, if they have, whether they believe it to be true, I cannot tell, but I may as well relate it in this place, leaving it to my readers to credit it or not, just as they may feel disposed. They can, if they please, look upon it as a merely *romantic story*,—so we will proceed with it at once.

When the fortress of Seringapatam fell into the hands of the British, after that ever-memorable siege which terminated in its capture and the overthrow of the Moslem dynasty in Southern India and the death of the Sultan Tippoo, the quantity of treasure collected by the captors was not in any way adequate to what was expected or reported to exist in various parts of the city. Some said that treasure to a vast amount had been carried out of the fort secretly; and others that a great deal had been thrown over the walls into the ditch, or sunk into wells, which were numerous in the citadel; others again reported that money had been fired at our troops by the enemy, by Tippoo's special orders, to scatter it in such a manner that little, if any, should come into the possession of the besiegers, should the place fall into their hands; and

it is a well known fact, that pieces of money, even at this distant period, are frequently found on the "maidan," or open ground round about the fort, and in the direction where our parallels of approach and batteries were constructed.

This last I have myself been informed by an old native officer of my acquaintance, who had served as a gunner at the siege in Tippoo's artillery, and was wounded on the foot during the action. This old gentleman said that he saw his own father, who was on the occasion an officer in command of one of the bastions, put a whole bag of money into the very gun at which he was stationed.

Now, whether this is *bonâ fide* fact, I cannot venture to affirm. He who told me the story was a respectable old soldier, since placed on the pension establishment, and he may be dead for aught I know, but as far as placing reliance on what he told me is concerned, I think his veracity can be trusted as well as that of any of his countrymen. However, be that as it may, we will proceed with our story.

It was currently reported that a great portion of the missing treasure had been carried away and concealed underground somewhere in the neighbourhood of the Nakennairy Pass, but where, no one in the British camp knew,—a pity they did not. It was also a well known fact that, when our gallant troops stormed the breach, there was a dreadful

hand-to-hand fight inside, and that the enemy made a desperate resistance; and it is also well known that the Sultaun Tippoo, in attempting to escape in his palankeen, was attacked by an European soldier, who drove his bayonet at him and eventually dispatched him, (not knowing, I believe, at the time who and what he was,) and that he despoiled him of his rich belt and scimitar studded with precious jewels.

The story goes, that when this soldier rushed at the sultaun, the latter was so alarmed and affrighted at the terrible looks of the heated and dreadful champion of the breach, who came upon him with a shout and an oath, that he cried out for quarter, adding, that if he would spare his life he would tell him where a greater portion of his treasure was concealed, and that he shewld be made possessor of it all.

The soldier was moved for the moment from his bloody intent at hearing the important intelligence, and asked the terrified sultaun where it was. Upon which the latter, thinking doubtless that he had gained his point, whispered the secret into his ear. The soldier, exasperated at the improbability of a native confiding such a secret to him, a common man in the ranks, pushed the suppliant from him, and thrust his bayonet into his breast; he then moved on, leaving the slain on the ground where he had fallen.

The death of the sultaun was not known for some time after the capture of the place ; however, in removing the heaps of dead at one of the gates, his mangled corpse was discovered among the rest in a state of nudity, stripped of everything about him ; and, had it not been recognised, he would have been buried with the common slain. The information which the British soldier had received, though he affected to disbelieve it at the moment, made a deep impression upon him, and when he began to con the matter over in his mind in the cool of the night, he came to the conclusion that there might be some truth in what had been thus imparted to him, for the man he had dispatched had revealed the secret in the hopes that his doing so would be the means of sparing his life. He therefore resolved upon the first favourable opportunity to visit this spot, and to ascertain from personal inspection whether what he had thus heard was falsehood, or truth, keeping the matter meanwhile strictly locked up within the secret recesses of his own heart. Avarice whispered to him that if there was really any treasure he would have it all himself ; and caution prompted him to say nothing about the matter to his superiors, or comrades, lest they should discover what he so much coveted, but which he hardly dared believe was true ; besides, if it turned out to be false, no one would be the wiser, and his fellow-soldiers would not have the laugh against

him ; so he kept the secret well, and determined at all hazards to come to some satisfactory conclusion.

Having arranged his plans, he asked permission to proceed on sick-furlough, started with some details, (men who had been disabled during the recent siege,) then on the point of quitting Seringapatam for the Carnatic. In course of the march, the party arrived at the village of Nakennairy or Venketagherry, (I forget which it is called,) where they halted for a couple of days, and, during this interval, the treasure-seeker managed to get away by himself, and went in quest of the place which had been told him by the sultaun, as already mentioned, and where the much-coveted gold and silver were said to be concealed.

He arrived at the mouth of the cavern indicated to him, and was on the point of entering it, when he was scared away by a roar, which startled the adventurer not a little. Looking up, he beheld to his great dismay, a huge tigress with two cubs standing close to him, and evidently meaning mischief. Treasure, riches, wealth, ambition, future happiness, grandeur, and every thing else upon which he had been cogitating and dreaming for some time past, all vanished with the rapidity of thought, and the brave soldier, who had dared and faced the perils and dangers of a recent bloody battle in the performance of his duty, was now quite

unnerved at sight of his terrible opponent as she stood glaring at him ; he had neither the courage, will, nor strength to encounter her, and self-preservation being at the moment predominant in his breast, he quailed before his foe and slunk off as quickly as his terrified legs could convey him ;—away from the very spot which had been his day-dream and his nightly vision, the very spot which he had so long sighed for ; the identical place which to his imagination possessed charms unrivalled in the universe ; the very spot which was supposed to contain all that he held most dear.

He came back as he had gone, empty-handed, covered with mud and dirt, bruised and torn from the rapidity of his flight through the jungle, terrified and unmanned, broken and dispirited. His comrades thought him mad, and his superiors remarked that all was not right with him. A change had certainly come over him ; poor disappointed wretch ! He reached the Presidency in safety, but an altered man. The thoughts maddened him of somebody else knowing the secret, of the treasure being discovered, of others enjoying it, of others sharing it, when he might have had all, all !

It was too much for him ; the bare supposition ; the very idea of such a thing was harrowing to his soul. Fool that he was for having slain the man who could have put him in possession of such vast wealth ! Had he saved his life, he might have been

rich and now returning to his native home, instead of a poverty-stricken soldier, without one farthing to jingle against another ! He might now have been enjoying and indulging in those bright visions of the happiness which awaited him on his arrival in England ; and once there, he might have become equal to the richest and greatest of the land. Wealth commands every thing ; and, if he had that wealth what might he not have been ?

But alas ! those golden dreams of halcyon days of bliss were now dissipated, and would in all probability never be realized ! Still had he hope. Perhaps those who knew the secret (if any did know it) were dead, or had been killed in the action with their master. He hoped so, and he thought so, and that to such an extent that he at last brought himself to believe that such was really the case ; and with that consoling idea, that bright star in the dim vista of futurity, which acted as a balm to his troubled spirit, he wended his way to England, where he arrived after a tedious voyage of upwards of six months.

Being a term-expired man, he had obtained his discharge from his regiment, and, free from the trammels of military discipline, he repaired to London, and laid a paper before the Court of Directors of the East India Company, stating that he had a most important matter to disclose to them, the which he would do, upon the proviso that the

result should benefit him equally as well as themselves; that is to say, if there was any benefit derivable, he was to have half.

He was desired to state his business, which he did with the utmost caution, and with an eye to his own interests, taking care that he did not betray the whereabouts before he was certain that he should share the profits. He then demanded a legally-drawn-out document to the purport that the Company bound themselves down to deliver over to him a dividend of one-half the amount of any treasure found in a certain place that would be hereafter indicated by the informant. The court would not assent to his propositions, and offered him other terms, to which, as a matter of course, he would not agree; and the former, believing his information to be the workings of an unsettled brain, turned him out of the place, and told him he was mad. The man went away, and what became of him, no one knew.

The East India Company, fancying that there might possibly be some truth in what this ci-devant soldier had told them, despatched secret instructions to the Madras authorities to the effect that trustworthy officers should be sent to search for treasure, which they had heard was buried in the neighbourhood of the Nakennairy Pass, (this latter information, I must observe, was communicated to them by the soldier, though he had not divulged

the exact position of the locality,) besides detailing every circumstance which they had contrived to glean from the man, together with their pros and cons on the subject.

In the mean time, it had become well known, and reported all over India, that treasure had been concealed somewhere, though no one seemed to know where; that the sultaun and two other individuals were alone acquainted with the spot, and that he, as well as the sharers of the secret, had been all three killed in the assault of the city. The government of the fort St. George, with their usual tact and good management, selected two trustworthy men, the one in the civil service, and the other an officer in the army, and sent them with secret orders, in search of the hidden treasure, taking up their residence at the very same village from whence the poor soldier had started but a few months ago on the same errand as that on which they had come.

They made their arrangements and sallied forth one day, well armed, in the direction of the hilly broken ground of the pass before mentioned; and there these two adventurers wandered about from morning till nightfall, continuing their search day after day, as if in quest of sport, without any success, bringing home with them, however, plenty of game, though *that* was not the sort of game which they were playing at. They were falcons soaring at a higher quarry than mere par-

tridges and hares ; gold mohurs, and star-pagodas, rupees, annas and pice, prompted their daily exertions, and how their adventures terminated, I will presently show the reader. One of the two, the military man, I believe, having separated from his comrade, came suddenly upon the entrance or mouth of what appeared to him to be a cave of considerable depth ! 'Twas indeed; the very same to which the soldier had come—the identical spot !

"This is a queer-looking place," said he of the scarlet coat ; "I should not be at all surprised if this is *the* place we have been so long looking for. I wonder where my companion is !" With that he shouted as loud as he could, making the cavern and surrounding rocks ring again.

He was presently joined by the absentee, and they both agreed that the cave, at the entrance of which they were standing, must be the one for which they had been directed to search, since they had been hunting up and down all over the neighbourhood, and had not seen anything resembling a cave anywhere else.

And so they had at last found the long-looked-for and supposed-to-be-full-of-treasure cave. And now that they had found it, what were they to do ? Report their success, to be sure ! But had they not better go in, and see what kind of a place it was ? It was so confounded dark, they wished they had some torches ; and suppose there were tigers in

it, which was not at all improbable, how were they to manage? "But who cares? We'll go in at once;" and the military leading, (very proper too, they should always lead every where !) they entered the cavern. Proceeding cautiously, with guns ready cocked, in case of their approach being disputed, they had advanced somewhere about four or five paces, when they both detected a very strong smell, which there was no mistaking.

"I smell tiger!" said one.

"So do I!" said the other.

"Shall we go on?" inquired the first.

"Let us go a little further," replied his companion, and they went a little further, when the leader suddenly came to a standstill, which caused the one behind, already on the tenter-hooks of expectation, to jump back as if electrified.

"What's the matter?" said he.

"Oh, I see them!"—whispered the military.

"See what?" asked his companion.

"Four huge glaring eye-balls!" slowly answered the other.

"The deuce you do! Do you, indeed?"

"Yes, I do! And look, one is moving, we are seen!"

"I vote we retreat," said the civilian; "if we are to fight, let's have daylight."

"We are in for it!" exclaimed red-coat. But, let us not turn tail; we must show them our eyes;

they are afraid of them ! I never saw such immense large ones in all my life !”

“ Large what ?” said the civilian.

“ Did you not see them ?” inquired the other.

“ Not I ! What were they ?”

“ Two as large tigers, male and female, as ever I saw !”

This questioning and answering took place when they had got outside, and when that was accomplished, they made the best of their way back to their encampment, thinking themselves well out of the cave, and the jaws of the terrible animals they had seen in it. These were, I presume, part of the same family which had scared away the poor soldier ! Who knows but that some of them may be there now ?

The two treasure-hunters reported the finding of the cavern, awaiting the reply of government as to what further was to be done. Shortly after, a large party of sappers, miners, pioneers, and engineers, were sent up to the place ; the unfortunate tigers were frightened out, (perhaps killed for aught I know,) the cavern was turned inside out, every nook and corner hunted, every inch of ground dug several feet down, but without success ; nothing was discovered save whitened bones of deer and cattle, the “ *spolia opima* ” of the lords of the forest.

There was no treasure, that was evident ; what

then had become of it? People said it was all a hoax, and that government had been gulled; and there was a regular laugh throughout the whole country against "*the benighted Presidency*," for having given credit to such a foolish report.

Well, and thus, my friends, ends my story. It may be true, and it may not; we will not argue the point. But I have not yet disposed of this treasure. What could have become of it? Who could have taken it away? I have heard say, but cannot vouch for the truth of it, that within a few years, there was a very old man residing in great affluence in some remote part of Scotland, who had been in former days nothing but a private in a Highland regiment, which had been some time in India; and that all his wealth had descended to some distant relations (who had been in very low circumstances) on his death.

I have heard that this self-same individual was no less a personage than the very soldier who had slain Tippoo Sultaun, from whom he had acquired the secret regarding the concealment of the treasure; and who had also, by much dint of perseverance, (how very persevering are the Scotch!) contrived to return to India, and had found out the whereabouts the treasure lay; had collected the money by degrees in one place; had disposed of it piece-meal as it were; had converted it into paper; had got that paper changed into English notes; and

had carried the whole, amounting to several thousand pounds up to his native village in the highlands of Scotland, where he had spent the rest of his days in quiet seclusion, in the very village which he had quitted an adventuring recruit, and to which he had returned a rich man.

How he must have chuckled to himself at having stolen a march upon the Court of Directors ! I say again, I do not vouch for the truth of the story. I have given it as it was told me, and I believe I am not very far wrong in point of detail. What a couple of griffins were those two, the military and civilian, I mean ; if they had persevered, they might have come in for something worth having, despite the strong smell and glaring eyes of the denizens of the cave !

## CHAPTER IV.

Our Colonel's fondness for Chess—Entrapment of the Butcher and Barber—Character of the Sepoys—Their physical Faculties greatly overtaxed in the Service—Drilling—Dress—Meagre Diet—Scantiness of Pay—Severe Duty—Generous Conduct to their dependent Relations—Consequent personal Destitution—Overwhelming Weight of military Accoutrements—The Sepoy on a Line of March—Heavy Charge of his Family—His extreme Poverty—His want of common Necessaries—His Anxieties—Effects upon his Health—Medical Care not always granted—Necessity of some Assistance—Tested Mode of Succouring the Sepoy in his Difficulties.



BESIDES being a beautiful musician and a first-rate flute player, our good old colonel was a capital hand at chess. Few could compete with him in that truly scientific game; and so excited would he become on the issue, when so engaged, that I have known many refuse to play with him. He and our worthy quarter-master (a very talented young man) used to be constantly wrangling with each other on the subject; and even when employed on duty matters, the colonel would begin

talking to him about the move of the red knight, or the checking of queen and castle; of taking the white bishop, or of checking his adversary; it was therefore a matter of difficulty with the quarter-master to get any business done.

At the breakfast-table, or at dinner, the same discussions would go on. In fact, we were quite worn out with hearing the old topic over and over again. The unfortunate official was the only person the colonel could get to play with him, and for want of others he would invariably give orders to the non-commissioned officer, going on in advance the previous evening, not to fail in securing for him the best chess-players in the town or village to which he was going; so that the poor man had not only to command the "Jumma-dana" guard, and had to collect supplies for the camp, but he was obliged to hunt out and assemble all the chess-players, and select the best amongst them for the *Colonel Sahib*, on pain of his severe displeasure, in case he failed.

If the individual, whoever he was, pitted against the great man, beat him, he would give him a few rupees for his trouble, and bid him take himself off to the regions of *Jahn-num*,\* a queer sort of a place, to which all true Moslems have a particular objection. If the man should have the good fortune to be beaten by the colonel, he would have

\* Hell.

for his reward nothing but a volley of abuse on his bad play, and being told that he ought to be ashamed of allowing himself to be beaten, that the little drummer-boy would play better, *et cetera*.

I remember, on one particular occasion, there had been a failure in procuring chess-players at one of the stages as usual; the non-commissioned officer reported that he could find none. The colonel was talking to me at the moment when he was informed of the disappointment, and was very wrath against the said havildar. He declared that it was utterly impossible for a native village, with Moslem inhabitants, not to have a chess-player in it; that the existence of such an individual was as certain as that of the *moollah* (priest), or *wustaad* (the schoolmaster), and ended by asking me to go and fetch him a fellow, never mind who he was.

“Seize hold of the first you find!” said the colonel; “the butcher or the barber will do; and if one or both cannot play at chess, I am much mistaken.”

I went accordingly into the village, and pretending to be in a violent passion, seized hold of the butcher, who, seated in his stall, was quietly vending his meat. I accused him of having cheated some of my men, and insisted on his coming instantly before the commanding officer. The poor fellow, quite alarmed at the earnestness of my manner, begged and supplicated, saying that he *was*

*a poor man*, and had not sold a morsel of meat to any of the men of the regiment. However, I desired him to accompany me, telling him to leave his lad to tend his shop, and that the Colonel Sahib would settle the business.

On my way back to camp with my prize in tow, I saw the *hūjam* (barber), seated under a tree, shaving the cranium of one of our subadars. I called out to him to come immediately, as the *būrrah sahib* (the great gentleman) wanted to be shaved. The barber, delighted at the idea of having to perform on so exalted a personage as a colonel, besides receiving, perhaps, one rupee for his services, instead of one anna, instantly let go the half-shaved sconce of the subadar, and followed me to the big man's tent, where the colonel was seated in his "puijamahs" (long drawers), smoking his cheroot, with the chess-board all ready for action. He saw my two captives, and without saying a word pointed the chess-board to them, as much as to assert that they could play, and that it was useless denying it. The butcher said he could play but a little, and that he would not presume to compete with his "Lordship, the defender of the poor!" The barber declared he knew nothing about the game.

The butcher was desired to sit down and do his best, while the barber was told to shave, and that when the butcher had tried his chance he should

take his place. The action commenced, and in the course of two hours the butcher was the victor. The colonel threw his cap into the poor man's face and gave him five rupees into the bargain, telling him that if he would follow the regiment the next march he should not be a loser. The grateful butcher rejoiced at his good fortune, promised with many obeisances that he would do so, and then quitted the tent.

Meanwhile the barber, who had shaved the colonel and the subadar also, returned to the tent, and took his seat with many salaams and excuses. The colonel told him to hold his tongue and go on. The two played for nearly three hours, and the issue was in favour of the barber, who also received a good quota of abusive anathemas, together with five rupees; the former he did not seem to care much for, and the latter he pocketed. He, too, was engaged to follow the camp to the next stage, and the colonel's orderlies were strictly enjoined to keep an eye upon them, so that they should both be present to renew the contest the day after.

The butcher and barber thanked me heartily for taking them up in the way I did, adding that they would willingly accompany the regiment to Vellore, if there were a chance of their earning five rupees a day so easily.

"Wait a little, my lads," said I, "you will get a settler, to-morrow."

"But, sir," said the butcher, "the colonel sahib cannot play at all."

"Wait," said I again, "you'll see. Woe betide you, if you do not beat him to-morrow. If you win, well; but if you lose, you will be kicked out of camp, and have to return to your village without anything. However, try your luck; nothing venture, nothing have."

They did venture, and got a sound drubbing both of them, in the short space of an hour each. They received a rupee for their trouble, and returned homewards much better off than I expected.

The Indian game at chess is not unlike our own, though there is a considerable difference; but as I have never troubled my head about it, I must beg to be excused my inability to explain what that difference is. The colonel employed a native in his own pay to come and play with him every day, and many have been the ludicrous scenes that I have witnessed between the two worthies when engaged at the game.

We were particularly fortunate during this march in regard to the health of our men and followers. The left wing, which had preceded us, had but one casualty, and that by cholera, and I am only surprised we escaped as we did. Our troops in India, and more particularly the native portion, have much to try them in marching. Naturally the sepoys of Madras (as is a well authenticated fact) are a very

hardy race of men, capable of much fatigue and inured to many privations. They are very patient, and when pushed to it, go through double the work that their brethren in arms of the other Presidencies are able to do. I am borne out in this assertion, not from experience, because I have never met troops either from Bengal or Bombay, but from the accounts of the last war, and the opinions of the leading military men of those days.

I doubt not but that the native soldiery of Bengal and Bombay do their duty, and are willing to undergo fatigue in its performance, but, comparatively speaking, they are not so hardy as the dapper little Madrassee, nor can they consequently go through as severe a service.

But with all this in their favour, they cannot stand against being over-worked. Whatever may be their hardihood, their capabilities of bearing fatigue, their untiring zeal, their undaunted courage under most trying circumstances, still man is man, and his energies may be tested beyond their limits. However strong, however brave, however patient, however willing, if they are tried above their physical powers, they must fall; fall they will, and fall they do.

The every-day occurrence of our gallant fellows being carried off by scores by that fell disease cholera, is a proof of what I say; but, in order to make myself perfectly understood, or that the reader

may be able to form some kind of conception, I will be as explicit as I possibly can in making a few observations, to show how much beyond their physical strength the poor native soldiers are pushed, and what a great deal the people at home have to learn, in order in some measure to account for the dreadful calamities which now-a-days visit our encampments and thin our ranks. I hope also to point out how much might be done to avoid the miseries to which these men are exposed, and to prove how easy it would be to ameliorate those sufferings with but little expense to the state, and with so much comfort and benefit to those very men to whose fidelity and courage that state owes its present security.

Let us first anatomize the native soldier, examining him from head to foot. But, before doing so, let us consider what was his mode of living previously to enlisting; what his wearing apparel, and what his habits. His mode of living may have been something approaching to starvation, or he might have been brought up in the lap of eastern comfort and luxury. If the former, his enlistment as a soldier does not better his condition much, as I think I can presently show. If the latter, what a change in his position in life, for a soldier never has any pay to feed himself upon! This I will also presently prove to the reader.

What then was his wearing apparel? Either he

was in a state bordering upon nudity, with perhaps a bit of rag round his waist, and perhaps not even that, or he was clothed in light muslins and cool drapery; his limbs in both cases free and unfettered, and their actions unrestrained by uniform coats and accoutrements. What were his habits? Either he was a ploughboy, a shepherd, an officer's servant, or a wealthy native's son; very different, at all events, in every respect, to what he becomes as a soldier; either he is a hard-working, toiling son of the soil, or brought up with every comfort and delicacy, unaccustomed to much personal fatigue, or to deprivations of any sort.

Turn we now to the man after he has become a soldier. The naked ploughboy, the artizan, the servant, or the well-clad wealthy native's son, whoever he may be, is transmogrified into a stiff, buckled-up-in-uniform soldier. His free and unfettered limbs are encased in tight scarlet cloth jacket and trowsers, in lieu of his light habiliments, whatever they might have been.

On his head he wears a heavy unwieldy *thing*, more like an inverted fire-bucket than a chaco, instead of his light *pugree*, or head cloth. In his left arm is placed a heavy musket, heavy enough for a roast-beef-fed Englishman to carry, but too much for the delicately-formed light body and slender limbs of the sepoy lad, who scarcely weighs one half of a European soldier!

On his back is slung a great knapsack, which contains all his regimental necessaries, a wardrobe sufficient certainly for use, and not a bit more than is absolutely requisite. This portmanteau is fastened to his body by means of leather-straps going round his shoulders and his chest, tight enough to cut him in two, in consequence of the weight of the pack.

Across his breast he has two broad belts, held together by a brass plate passing on either side of him. To one of these is fastened his bayonet, and to the other his pouch or cartouch-box, a huge leather thing, large enough to contain some sixty rounds of ball ammunition, the whole sufficient to break a poor man's back. Round his waist passes another belt, intended to keep the others together, but tight enough to cut his very intestines out of him. On his feet he wears a pair of clumsy things called sandals ("chüppüls," as the natives nominate them), such ungainly looking affairs that I really must be excused describing them, for I cannot.

Behold the man ! This is a true description of him ; of what a sepoy is with all his honours about him. Taking his average height, he is about five feet six and a half inches. His age is about six-and-twenty, or more. His make delicate, though his arms and legs are strong in proportion. Chest rather inclined to be narrow, and general health

good. They must be sound in wind and limb, else they cannot be enlisted ; so now I think I have not overdrawn the picture.

But a sepoy, on being enlisted, has to undergo a course of drill and instruction to fit him for the duties of a soldier. During this ordeal, he is subjected to the most harassing and fatiguing work which man can ever have to perform ; work of a peculiar nature, which tries the mind as well as the body, and it is surprising how he manages to get through it. He has to be at drill early in the morning, turning out of his bed at three o'clock, sometimes earlier, so as to avoid being punished.

He does not get home again to his hut until past eight o'clock, a period of upwards of five hours. No sooner does he contrive to cook and swallow a miserable meal, than he is again called away to the barracks (situated generally some distance from where the men are huttied), for the purpose of cleaning his arms and accoutrements, and when that is done to go through a little drill again, by way of keeping him in mind of what he learned that morning. This does not permit him to get home until nearly two o'clock, and at four he must again wend his way down to the barracks for the purpose of drilling a third time during one day.

And this hard work continues with increasing difficulties and fatigue as he advances in his instructions. Twice a day he has to appear in a par-

ticular uniform,—white jacket and black pantaloons,—and, if either are dirty, woe betide him ! His opportunities, therefore, of feeding and repose are few. He cannot have rest, and as for food, poor wretch, where is he to get that from, unless he begs, or borrows.

The reader will ask, where is his pay ? I will solve the question in a moment. His pay is almost nominal. And how can that be ? I will explain. A recruit, on first enlisting, is not allowed to receive his monthly pay, excepting by instalments, lest he should run away, and this is done as a check upon the poor lad, and very justly so, too ; though I think some beneficial improvement might be made on the restriction.

Recruits never receive their whole pay together, until they are fit to join the ranks and are sworn in, and then only are they considered trustworthy, and consequently fit to receive it in full. The pay of a private soldier for the first fifteen years is seven rupees a month, exclusive of other benefits, such as full batta, &c. &c. Whilst a recruit, these seven rupees are divided into three parts and given to him on the first of the month, on the fifteenth, and on the last day of the month, or in any other way that the adjutant may deem fit to arrange.

Still the question is, how comes it that the recruit sepoy has not any food ? His pay is dribbled out to him by small instalments ; from the first of

which he has a deduction of one rupee or more, for the purposes of setting him up in his kit, as follows: knapsack and slings, cooking utensils, chaco or turban, havresack, white jackets, cloth cloak, white and black trousers, white cloths, hand-kerchiefs, stocks, sandals, carpets, *et cetera*, all which amount to upwards of twenty rupees, and which he must pay for out of his own pittance; the various articles have fixed prices, with little or no abatement in them, and they are served out to him from regimental supplies, under the supervision of the quarter-master.

The necessary deductions for such articles of knapsack kit, and the way in which their pay is dribbled out to them by instalments, give the poor recruit soldier little or nothing to keep body and soul together; and, when we consider that in all probability each individual man has to support so many more mouths besides himself, we may come justly to the conclusion that he has not much wherewithal to feed himself, and thus what little pay he does receive is absolutely insufficient to enable him to live in a manner to give him strength and stamina to go through the harassing duties I have above detailed.

Let us now suppose the young sepoy passed through the ordeal of drill and instruction. This takes five months, and sometimes more, according to circumstances and the man's own capabilities of

learning. If he is a dunce, he is so much as eight months learning his duty; if sickly, he is even longer than that; and, if smart and intelligent, he becomes fit for duty in three or four months. He now joins the ranks, falls in with his company, takes his tour of duty in the Roster, is properly armed and accoutred in the way I have described, and receives his pay, *minus* the usual deductions for something or other.

I have seldom known a month pass without some stoppage from the poor man's pay; the debtor and creditor account is scarcely ever closed. We will now suppose his regiment stationed in a garrison, or cantonment, that is to say, *not* marching. He has a hut or hovel in the lines, to erect which he receives a gratuity of two rupees from government, while the hut costs him treble that amount, and even double that again, to make it comfortable for himself and his numerous followers; and, when he quits that station his property is valued by a committee, and fetches about one, two or three rupees at the utmost. This loss occurs at every station, and is one that the poor man cannot afford, but still he alone is the loser, and must always be so, until the practice of hutting the native troops is done away with, a practice attended with innumerable disadvantages to the troops themselves, as well as to the state.

As before observed, so soon as a man is known

to have enlisted in the service, all the poorer members of his family flock to him for support (here the native shows an excellent trait of character), and he does support them, too, despite his poverty ; he starves himself rather than that they should want. His dependants are many. He has probably his father and mother, sisters and brothers, grandfather or grandmother, or both, uncles and aunts, and even his friends. He may be a married man, and he may have a family, and these he must feed, in addition to the abovementioned incumbrances.

All these derive their daily sustenance from one fostering hand, and how they contrive to exist upon such very small means is indeed astonishing. They do contrive certainly, but the nourishment is poor and the consequent benefit inadequate. The difficulties, therefore, which the sepoy has to contend with are many, and with such demands upon his scanty purse, it may be very easily concluded that he is unable to put by any small sum during the period in which his regiment remains stationary, for the purpose of meeting the increased difficulties which very soon come upon him, when the time comes for changing to another and distant station, entailing upon him extra expenses of marching and of moving his many connexions, some of whom, with his household property, require either bullocks or a bandy.

While in garrison, or cantonment, the duties are severe, the drills and parades frequent, and the station may be expensive as regards the necessaries of life. He must keep up his knapsack-kit complete, the wear and tear of uniforms are great; and to appear neat and soldier-like (if he is a man of spirit, and looks for promotion), he must maintain these articles of dress at his own expense, because the clothing allowed by government is not sufficient.

All these things must be paid for, exclusive of other regimental stoppages; and, in addition, he must feed himself and his family, whatever their number. How can he do so? Impossible, unless he begs, borrows, or steals! The first, his pride will not admit of; the second, the regulations prevent; and the man who is involved in debt has a kind of black mark against him; but how is he to avoid debt? What is he to do? He must starve, or he must eke out a wretched existence upon the most meagre sustenance that man can possibly partake of, and which is not even fit for dogs to eat.

And what may this meagre diet be? Rice of the worst description, boiled; sometimes with a little curry, made of salt-fish or bad meat, and that is only occasionally. The water in which the rice is boiled (called *conjee*), with a little common salt put into it, and a raw onion, frequently forms the principal meal of the day. Their breakfast is

nothing but a cupful of *tyre*, or butter-milk, without accompaniment; and this is taken either immediately after returning from drill, or not at all. The supper is simply a portion of the rice which was boiled at mid-day, or with the addition of a morsel of boiled fish. The remainder of the rice is kept till the next morning in a *chatty*, or pot, half filled with water. This boiled rice in the water is eat for the next day's dinner, with a chili and salt, occasionally accompanied with an onion; and sometimes, by way of a treat, a few miserable, unwholesome greens (peculiar to the country, called *bajee*) are collected, and, with a little fish, cooked up into a sort of curry.

Such, my readers, is, with little or no variation, the constant fare of our native soldiery; and I think I may safely say, that oftentimes it is not so good. They cannot get better; they have not the means. If the sepoy feeds himself with the good things of life, his family must starve, so he has no help for himself. What stamina, then, has he to undergo fatigue and hardship, if he does not receive sustenance adequate to the duties he has to perform? That his feeding is poor, I have shown clearly; how, then, can he be the efficient soldier? and how can he withstand the inconveniences and fatigues to which his duties expose him?

Look at any of our sepoys in the ranks at an *inspection parade*, when the regiment is under arms

in *heavy marching order*. See him with his lumbering pack, weighing I know not how many pounds; I say I know not, because the articles inside are of a variety of textures, so that it would be impossible to tell exactly. The average weight, however, may be computed at  $17\frac{1}{2}$  pounds, and that is heavy enough in all conscience. This huge thing slung to a man's shoulders, with his great big firelock in his arm, his pouch full of ammunition, his body buckled up and hampered with tight fitting clothing and accoutrements, the accursed turban on his head,—behold him! see how he stands!

The man literally totters under the weight! He is unable to bear it; the perspiration pours from him in torrents; he is sick, and very often faints and falls. And yet the men are called unsteady under arms by reviewing generals, because, under such heavy burthens, they do not stand without moving. They cannot help moving; poor wretches, they have not the strength to bear up against such break-back harnessing.

When the regiment is put into motion to go through any manœuvres, how do the men march? With the greatest difficulty. They cannot march. They lag; open their files; lose ground; lose step; and very frequently tumble down, which throws the whole into confusion. If this takes place in common routine, what must it be before the enemy?

How many men fall to the rear on a parade of the above description ?

Ask a man in the ranks if there is anything the matter with him ; his complaint is always about his knapsack being too heavy ; that his limbs ache ; that he feels giddy and sick ; and that he cannot stand. This complaint made, he is ordered into hospital ; but it is not the hospital he requires, 'tis wholesome, good food and less work.

But the sepoy can work, and has worked, and will work ; he is equal to anything. Let him, then, be so armed and accoutred and dressed, that he *can* do his work with ease. Overload a cart, it will either upset or break down. The same with man ; he ought not to have a burthen put upon him greater than he is able to bear.

And allow me here to remark, with reference to the hospital, the rules of that establishment are necessarily strict. No man is admitted a patient, however ill he may feel, unless the medical officer *thinks* him so. Many a poor fellow is, therefore, never allowed the benefits of medical treatment, and is, in consequence, compelled to adopt that of native doctors, who invariably prescribe powerful stimulants, which tend more towards aggravating their maladies than curing them. The sepoy being thus excluded from his own hospital at the commencement of any disorder, brought on in many instances from over work and poor diet, lingers on

without remedy, tries to do his duty, and is at last, worn out and dispirited, *carried* into hospital, from whence he never returns; or, if he does, a broken down useless man.

Many a brave fellow have I seen battling against disease; and, when I have asked why he does not go into hospital, the reply has always been, "They will not receive me." It is frequently the case, that when a man is taken there, he is dismissed by the medical subordinate as a *shulker*, and that too without any report to the superior; such dismissals being often attended by serious results to the sufferer.

Thus a sepoy, starving and over worked from the time he enters the service, becomes ill from the consequences, and has not that proper care taken of him which his case demands; he thus falls off, either dies, is discharged, or placed on the invalid establishment, which latter is like jumping out of the frying-pan into the fire; for there he is harder worked and receives less pay than in his original condition; so that the last state of the man is indeed worse than the first.

But let us look at the sepoy at a common morning drill, or on guard. See how he uses his firelock; what an enormous weight he bears on that thin arm and small hand. Our seniors find fault, and say that such and such a regiment do not

carry their firelocks correctly. This is the same throughout the army. I have not seen one regiment (and I have seen many, almost all of them) carry their muskets as they should do, 'tis morally impossible. Look at the sepoy again; see how he has to exert himself to throw the musket up to his shoulder. He is obliged to bend down to lift it; and why? because it is too heavy for him.

Look at him on his post as a sentry, how he slouches about, and how languidly he moves! He is constantly changing his firelock from one shoulder to the other; and nine out of ten, during the night, put them against a wall, and sit down on the ground from pure exhaustion.

Look at the sepoy again, when firing ball. With what difficulty does he level his piece; and see,—he pulls the trigger, and the discharge takes place. What a shock does the recoil give him! It frequently knocks him back. He has not the strength to wield such a weapon. Then, why give it to him? He would be ten per cent. more efficient with a light fuzil. Surely 'tis not the size of the firelock, or that of the bullet, that makes the soldier; it is a mistake to think so. The fact of the matter is this, if our native troops were sufficiently fed, more lightly clothed, armed and accoutred, they would be the better, and more fit for service, than they are at present.

Turn we now to a sepoy on the line of march.

We will suppose him in the ranks. We have seen his means of subsistence ; we know how he feeds, how he is clothed, and how he can undergo his duties in garrison. Now let the reader patiently follow me a little longer, and I will show him the miseries, the privations, and the fatigues to which he is exposed while marching. Before starting, a sepoy generally receives an advance of pay ; perhaps he has it in full, or only half, according to the pleasure of the commanding officer, or the distance he has to go. With this advance of pay he has to clear himself from the station (for probably he has incurred debts), besides paying an advance equal to one half, or altogether, as the case may be, for the means of conveying his goods and chattels, as well as his numerous family, some of whom, particularly the young and aged, are unable to walk.

Exclusively of all this, he has to provide the means of sustenance for himself and dependants, and that with a total of perhaps two rupees in his pocket, for a journey of about two or three or four hundred miles ! How can he do this ? Impossible ! He must starve and so must his family ; at all events, they must from sheer necessity feed themselves upon the most economical plans that they can possibly devise.

Curry and rice are luxuries they dare not think of. Plain boiled rice is not so expensive, and of that they sometimes do manage to have a treat,

about two mouthfuls each. Bread or biscuits, or *chuppatees* (cakes made of rice flour), are quite out of the question. Butter-milk with a green chili after it, and now and then a bit of salt fish by way of a relish, is generally their sole food ; and parched peas, or raw *chenna* (or grain), forms a kind of variety, which they chew, resembling the cud of bitter poverty in every sense of the word.

Upon this sort of diet have they to support nature, and be fit for the duties to which they are called in the camp and on the route. The sepoy has to take his tour of guard once every three days (sometimes oftener), exposed at nights to the damp chilly dew, and perhaps be drenched with rain, being obliged to remain so for hours together during the whole night, and march the next morning without change of clothes, and without any food or other description of creature comfort, save a pot full of that abominable trash, butter-milk.

On arriving at the next stage, he has no comfortable breakfast, no hot coffee, no dram, nothing except some cold rice and water of the preceding day to satisfy his hunger. All this time he has to carry his pack, firelock, and accoutrements ; his chaco, his pouch full of ball cartridges ; the body emaciated and rendered feeble from want of proper sustenance ; how is it possible for the wretched man to go through all this without breaking down ?

Independently of fatigue of body, anxieties of the mind are sufficient to weigh down the stoutest spirit. Want and poverty staring him in the face, he casts his thoughts upon his family. He hears their wailings for food without being able to alleviate their wants, or appease their hunger. He shares his miserable meal with them, such as it is; nay, denies himself that they may have as much as he can give them. He has his duties to attend to, so that they have in a measure to shift for themselves. He marches with his company, having either sent them on in advance, or left them behind to follow.

He reaches the camp, and sees nothing of his family for hours together; in the meantime, fatigued with his journey and without any food, he is perhaps put on guard, in which case they must shift for themselves, and get into camp as well as they can. Or, if he is not on duty, he has to go back again perhaps some four or five miles to assist the laggards behind, and on coming up to them finds the bandy upset, and all his people in confusion.

These circumstances add not a little to the poor man's difficulties, and it very often happens that he does not come to a bona-fide halt, till past two o'clock in the afternoon, and all this time without food of any description—neither he nor his dependants! There are of course exceptions to the

rule, and I have known men get on beautifully on a line of march, but these are very few.

I do not think that I have erred in what I have said. Indeed I feel confident I have not said one hundredth part of all these poor fellows have to undergo. The sepoy being thus badly fed (not fed at all in many instances !) and thus harassed in mind and body—the followers (thousands of them, too, to one regiment) being thus half starved and miserably accommodated from want of covering against the inclemencies of the weather, or the heat, badly clothed and helpless, can it be at all surprising that an epidemic should break out, and when it does make its appearance amongst them in the appalling form of cholera, that it rages with all its fury, and carries off the officers, soldiers, and the poor camp-followers by hundreds ?

The very circumstance of the men and followers being badly fed, badly clothed, and overworked, brings on a predisposition to the disease, and when attacked, poor wretches, they have not the strength either of body or mind to wrestle with it, and are cut down by scores every day. Our governors, our commanders-in-chief, our adjutants-general, in fact, the whole world are astonished, thunderstruck, amazed, and disheartened, at hearing the dismal, nay, heart-rending accounts which follow the movements now-a-days of our troops.

Cholera is sure to break out in three regiments out of four ! And they cannot conceive or adopt any means to prevent it. The hand of the Almighty is in every thing that befalls us here below ; and perhaps this pestilence is intended by His will for some wise purpose ;—but does it not behove those in whose hands He entrusts his creatures, to do every thing in their power to ameliorate their sufferings, and to exert the means which He has placed in their hands towards warding off such visitations as may come upon them ? There is no lack of medical aid. These men know how to treat the disease ; but, when the patient is so reduced from weakness, caused by want of good diet and over fatigue, it baffles all their skill and judgment.

I say again, where there is a predisposition to it, this dreadful scourge is sure to make its appearance ; and, when it once shows itself among the followers, there is no checking it. That predisposition is, in my humble opinion, brought on by weakness of stamina, from bad feeding, from hard work, and from the discomforts of bad accommodation ; and I maintain that if the government were to make some other arrangement for the bettering the condition of our native troops, arming and clothing them more lightly ; disburthening them of that useless appendage, the back-breaking knapsack ; taking steps towards providing them with proper food ; besides furnishing the camp followers

with comfortable pals, or tents, for their peculiar accommodation ; there would not be half the casualties that do occur, if any at all.

From the above observations some of my readers may feel disposed to ask, why then do European troops suffer from the same disease ? They are better fed, and every comfort is allowed them ? To this, I think, the same cause is applicable, predisposition to the disease, brought on by excess and irregularities, as well as by exposure to heat during the day, and to the damp dews of the night.

Europeans before marching have hot coffee served out, then they have their drams also twice a day, and are very substantially fed, and it would appear that as far as the creature comforts are concerned they want nothing ; still the disease does come among them, and I think I am not wrong in saying, that those who are attacked and carried off are men of dissipated habits, and irregular in their mode of living.

But be this as it may, a predisposition exists, and as long as that is the case the disease is sure to prevail despite all the efforts to prevent it. I may be asked also, how did things go on formerly, troops marched and counter-marched, and yet there was no cholera ? This is answered easily. In those times the disease was not in the country, and there was nothing to be afraid of ; but now that it is in the country, and the state of health from weakness

of body of the troops affords a predisposition to an attack, we may easily understand in what way it pounces upon its victims and commits the awful havoc which we hear and read of whenever a body of men make a march in India.

“What is to be done?” is the universal cry. Men at the head of affairs are at their wit’s ends, and know not which way to turn. In very truth, it is “the pestilence that walketh in darkness,” “and the arrow that flieth by noon-day!” I must confess again, that it is my opinion, that the grand secret lies in what I have already said. If our troops were better fed, less worked, and more lightly armed and accoutred, the cholera, or any other epidemical complaint, would not show itself in our camps so often as it does.

Officers of a regiment on a march are very peculiarly situated with regard to the feeding of their men. In native corps there are no messes for the sepoy as in the European; nor can we in any way interfere with their culinary arrangements; we cannot, therefore, except by casual observation, tell what they eat and what they drink. Any suggestions or any advice relative to their diet is deemed improper, so that we cannot introduce any improvements if we would. The officers have a certain pay, out of which they must keep up a certain establishment, besides defraying the expenses of their messing, as well as those of their marching.

Those who are in command of companies receive a small additional allowance, a sum of thirty rupees per month, not in any way adequate to the expenses they are put to on account of their men, and with which they are obliged to keep up the regulated number of regimental books and records, as well as pay for the stationery used in the transaction of business ; to say nothing of the pull on the pockets for improving the men's appearances by the having to pay additional sums for one thing or another, and for which no allowance whatsoever is made by government. If the dress of our troops were allowed to remain as we receive them from the stores, what a precious looking set of soldiers they would be !

With such paltry means in our hands, how can we aid our poverty-stricken, half-starved sepoys ? How can we stretch forth the helping hand of relief ? How can we administer to their comforts, or alleviate their distresses ? The regulations of the service are rigid and severe with regard to their mode of marching. The knapsack, heavy as it is, must be carried on the back, as must also the ponderous firelock ; the brain-racking chaco must not be dispensed with, and the pouch must have its full marching complement of cartridges. Such restrictions must be acted up to ; we must obey ; they cannot be done away with. We cannot disburthen

them of the enormous quantity they carry upon their emaciated bodies.

Would that we could ; for then I am confident that our marches from one station to another would not be so replete as they now are with disease and death, and officers, as well as men, would undertake their journeys with feelings of pleasure and satisfaction, instead of looking upon them with sad forebodings of impending calamities. Many a time and oft has the poor sepoy come to me begging to be let off carrying his knapsack, with distressing complaints somewhat to the following effect :—

“ Pray sir, allow me to put my knapsack on my bandy ; it will be well taken care of by my people. I am weak and unable to carry it as well as my firelock and ammunition. I cannot do it, sir, pray excuse me the knapsack.”

This is a common complaint ; while another would come and say—

“ Please sir, will you kindly lend me half a rupee ? I will repay you when I get my pay. My family has not had anything to eat these two days, and I too am starving. I feel myself so weak that I cannot do my duty if I eat nothing. Pray be kind, sir, and lend me the half rupee. I will never ask again.”

A third would come and say—

“ My bandy-man, sir, refuses to come on unless

I give him some more money. What shall I do, sir? I have not got a pice in the world!"

These and many other similar distressing complaints and solicitations are constantly made, and in nine cases out of ten officers are unable to render any assistance. I will now take upon myself to mention to the young military reader, the line of conduct I adopted, and what I used to do on the line of march, which I am now recording, and on similar subsequent occasions. The difficulty consists in making a beginning, though I do not think there can be inability when the will of the heart prompts the good intention. We frequently form resolutions, but fail in putting them into practice, from a want of determination to carry them through.

For instance. When we find ourselves in possession of any sum of money, we generally make as much haste as we possibly can in thinking of the *best* and most profitable mode of disposing of it. We con over in our minds a variety of good plans, and resolve to adopt that which we think to be the best; but something else is sure to enter our heads, which induces us to swerve from our original intentions, and it usually ends in the money being heedlessly thrown away in some foolish expenditure, or to feed some nonsensical whim of worldly vanity.

On the occasion at present under course of narration, I did form a good resolution, and I am happy in

being able to say that I went through with it much to my satisfaction ; but do not let the reader think that I mention this by way of attempting to make myself out as one single exception to the general rule. God knows I have formed many a plan of future good, and many a purpose of action ; but I have been like my neighbours, and have failed. Still in the instance now in my recollection, I cannot but congratulate myself in knowing that I succeeded in my resolve, and did the good that I wished to do.

It so happened, that when we received orders to quit Mangalore, I disposed of all my kit of furniture, crockery, and every thing else, for little or nothing, as before related ; for which I got from the rascally old Parsee who bought them somewhere about seventy or eighty rupees. In addition to this sum, I received one month's pay in advance, besides some twenty rupees for a pair of old horse-pistols, which I sold as useless lumber ; and I must here observe, that I made it a rule to appropriate my company allowance entirely for the benefit of the men whom I commanded ; and I thought that if I had a good nest-egg for the time of need, I might be able to assist any poor fellow who might break down *en route*, for want of the wherewithal to keep the *bivouac* pot boiling ; and glad indeed was I hereafter, that I had made such a provision.

After paying everything, I found upon counting my balances, that I had a sum of money amounting to upwards of one hundred and fifty rupees remaining. This I looked upon as a capital relief-fund, and so put it into the regimental cash-chest, as money belonging to the company, by way of security ; keeping, however, some ten or twelve rupees in a bag for immediate use.

Every halting-day I treated my men to some sheep, and to those I knew to be hard up, I invariably dealt out so much rice, curry-stuff, or any thing else that they might require ; or, if money was necessary, I made no objections to giving those that wanted a small sum, taking care to put down the names of all who benefited, for the purpose of avoiding, as much as possible, extending my bounty to the same person more than was absolutely requisite, while others had not been similarly treated.

At the same time, I made the whole company understand, that any misbehaviour would be the means of forfeiting my good will, and the delinquent, would get nothing from me, except my displeasure and punishment. Whenever a man complained to me that he was unable to carry his knapsack, I always sent him to the doctor, and if he was reported weak, I invariably excused him the oppressive burden. If a man was lame or had blistered his feet, I would allow him to go on in advance with his family, or follow slowly in the rear. If a

sepoy came to me to say that his wife or any of his family were indisposed, I would give some brandy or port wine, or anything else that might be required ; in fact, gentle reader, I would busy my whole heart and soul in administering to the wants and comforts of my men ; never a day passed without my assisting some of them.

I do not recollect having once detected any attempt to deceive me ; indeed, the fellows knew me too well to try any thing of the sort. They were all perfectly aware that one case of deception would immediately bring condign punishment upon the offender ; and I kept my non-commissioned so close to their work by personal superintendence, that any irregularities were sure to be brought to my knowledge as they occurred. The consequences were, that I never had cause to repent of my kindness towards my men ; they appreciated it, and it was a great satisfaction to me to know that I had, in some measure, done them good, and that they looked up to me, and would do anything for me.

I cannot help saying, that so well behaved were the whole of my men during this march, that I only had occasion to resort to punishment once, and that was a case of drunkenness on the part of a recruit, the fellow having got into a "*toddy tope*," made a hole in the callibash with the point of his bayonet, and drank the liquor, which he managed to catch in his "*lota*," or small canteen.

I must now say a few concluding words with reference to the latter part of this chapter, by way of exhortation to my young military readers, whom I strongly urge to adopt a similar line of conduct. They will find themselves the gainers in the end a hundred fold. I only wish that all officers would have a little more consideration for the comfort and sufferings of their men. They little think the good they would do, were they to look more to the welfare of those under them, and less to their own. Alas, alas ! none but those who have witnessed them, can tell of the miseries which our sepoys have to endure on-a line of march, or of the horrors of a camp under the influence of cholera.

Does it not then behove those who have the means to give to those who have not ? Our government spend much money in charitable purposes; and lacs of rupees are also expended by them in keeping up the regulated number of men in each regiment, to fill up the vacancies caused by casualties on a march from cholera ; but I do declare, that they would save as much more were they to pay them better, do away with their heavy arms and accoutrements, and make some allowance towards bettering the conditions of the camp followers, who are nothing but a part and parcel of the *matériel* of their standing army. In their welfare and comfort consist the contentment, gratitude, and consequent fidelity of the troops

to whom they are attached. Government should, therefore, take these objects of their care into primary consideration, and not treat them, as they now are treated, worse than the brute creation.

Our army is over worked ; they have more duties to perform than they are able. The recent reductions have made the duty worse. There ought to be more regiments to take care of the country. If there were, the necessity of constant marching would not exist. There is a continual recruiting throughout the whole service ; nothing but alterations and casualties, from one end of the year to the other. We no sooner make soldiers, and good soldiers, too, than we lose them. And what a fearful expense all this is ! When we consider it, we are astounded, and really wonder that other steps are not taken to try and prevent those dreadful calamities which are ever thinning our ranks, and depriving our regiments of our best and bravest soldiers !

## CHAPTER V.

Arrival at Vellore—Satisfaction of Officers and Men—A Meeting with old Comrades—Vicissitudes of a Soldier's Life—Quarters and Remarks upon them—The Cantonment, Fort, and Works—Convicts—Scene of the famous Mutiny—Massacre of the Mutineers—Tippoo Sultan's private Palace—His imprisoned Wives—Other State Prisoners—A Chapel—No Protestant Church or Clergyman—The Ditch and its Tribe of Alligators—Firing of Evening and Morning Gun, and curious Evasion of the Soldiers—The unfortunate Boy and the Alligator—Hill Forts in the Neighbourhood—Stratagem of War—Vellore as a Garrison—Society of the Place—My Chum and I.

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AT length we came to the end of our journey, and entered the garrison of Vellore, after a march exactly of a month and a half, without having had a single casualty either of men, followers, or cattle. We were, indeed, singularly fortunate. I shall never forget the joy with which our men hailed the sight of the place as we neared it; nor shall I forget the delight I myself experienced at thoughts of once more becoming settled, though how long that was likely to last it was impossible for me to tell.

Several of the officers and men of the other

wing came out to meet us, and right glad were we to see old faces and old friends. It is, indeed, a great pleasure to have the hand of welcome held forth on arriving at a strange place, and the meeting with an old comrade carries with it a peculiarity of feeling which makes the heart bound with joy, as if the traveller were looking upon the features of a dear brother, or relative ! At least, such were the sensations I experienced, as I caught a glimpse of the merry faces of two fellow subs, as they rode up to the column ; and I cannot help here mentioning this circumstance, trivial as it may appear to the reader to be, because the doing so brings forcibly to my recollection the boyish delights of days gone by, and the friendships of some, whose warm hearts have long ceased to beat, and whose warm hands now lie cold in the grave.

Chequered in truth is the life of a soldier, more so probably, than that of other professions, and still more particularly so in India. We are happy and joyous to day ; and to-morrow—where are we ? Our friendships are formed and matured, but our friends are with us one day, and the next sees them in the narrow bed, the common lot of us all ; that bourne from whence no traveller ever returns ! We see around us smiling faces, radiant with the glow of youthful health and vigour, caring for nothing, thinking of nothing ; then the scene changes, they are removed from us, and the places which

knew them, know them no more ; they are gone for ever, and we must all follow the same route, which leads through the valley of the shadow of death ; showing us forcibly the great necessity of having our loins girded, and our lamps burning, awaiting for the same summons which has called away those before us, and which we must all obey, from the least among us even to the greatest.

The meeting with our old companions in arms, on the occasion of our marching into Vellore, was one fraught with pleasure. Officers shook each other heartily by the hand, and men mingled in the ranks and embraced their comrades with delight. 'Tis indeed an exhilarating sight, and does a man's heart good to see such feelings existing amongst so large a mass of people ; feelings which reflect credit upon and do honour to those in whose breasts they are engendered.

On our arrival, we were conducted to the barracks appropriated for our use, and as no lines were ready for the men, the encampment was formed and occupied until every thing was ready for the reception of the families. The officers in the meantime rode about the cantonment in quest of accommodations for themselves ; there were many houses vacant ; many to pick and choose from, so that we had but one difficulty to contend with, and that was the rent, an important consideration, but which few take the trouble of making. The rents of

houses in almost every military station are fixed and regulated by the authorities, according to size and respectability, so that no man is ever liable to be imposed upon, except by his own folly in entering a house with a rent too high for his purse.

Some of the quarters, however, bear much higher rents than they are really worth, and this I must say is a great drawback in most of our cantonments, the landlords being allowed their own way, and the means of the occupants not being held in any regard. Being for the most part miserly and grasping, the former will not go to any expense to meet the wishes and accommodations of the latter, by keeping their houses in proper repair, or making any additions or alterations which may be required.

The station authorities, who have the management of these fellows, will not take the trouble to keep them in order, or of seeing that they do what is requisite to render the quarters in any way habitable or adequate to the rent charged. Some of the houses are really not fit for pig-stytes, far less for European gentlefolk with their families to reside in; and yet we are from necessity obliged to occupy them, and in order to render them comfortable we have to undergo extra expenses, which we cannot afford, and which the landlords are reluctant to make good by allowing deductions from the regulated house-rent.

It very frequently is the case, that no sooner

does a man convert his quarters (at his own expense) into a respectable residence, than he is ordered away, and his trouble and outlay become a dead loss to him. This has to be repeated at the next station, and so on at every new place. People say that government allow house-rent ; true, they do. But is the allowance sufficient ? No, it is not, because that fixed on the houses is more than that allowed, and officers must live respectably ; they cannot take themselves and their families into dirty hovels. They must attend to their comforts ; they must consider the health of their wives and children.

The government allowance would be sufficient were the quarters for officers at our different stations kept in proper repair, and the rent regulated accordingly ; and this would be done if the authorities were to look after the landlords and keep them at their work. If the commanding officers of every station were to insist upon owners of houses maintaining them in a proper condition, whether tenanted or not, it would much conduce to the comfort of new comers, besides keeping the place clean and healthy ; for, as regards the latter, I verily believe that our officers and their families residing, as they are frequently obliged to do, in ruinous, damp, dirty houses, suffer more from the consequences than from the climate of the country.

The generality of our stations are anything but

what they ought to be in point of cleanliness and salubrity. The houses are in a dilapidated state, the enclosures overgrown with rank vegetation, the hedges thick and untrimmed : behind them are to be seen heaps of rubbish from the stables, and other places ; the water courses and bridge arches being used for purposes far different to what they are intended ; the grass grows thick and super-abundant on the road sides, and if there is a fort the water in the ditch is stagnant, and the nuisance arising therefrom dreadfully offensive ; all the dead dogs and cats are thrown into it, and all the sewers of the place empty themselves therein ; should the ditch be a dry one, it is full of bushes and long grass, and a receptacle for all the rubbish in the station, which is invariably thrown over the walls for want of a more convenient place.

The reader will thus see that there is vast room for improvement in all our stations, small and great, and how much remains to be done towards conducting to the health of the residents. It is wrong for people to say that it is the climate which renders India a sickly country—far from it ! If some of the money, which is uselessly squandered away by the state, were to be laid out in improvements which are so requisite to render our towns, villages, hamlets, forts and cantonments clean and consequently healthy, I vouch for it that there would not be one half the mortality among the European

(ay, and native too,) residents in India, that we now-a-days witness to such a frightful extent.

The cantonment and fort of Vellore, at the time I arrived there, were instances of what I have stated. What it may now be I know not, better I hope, though I fear it is not so. The greater portion of the houses were more or less in a ruinous state, not fit for the residence of human beings. There were exceptions truly, but these consisted in large mansions, with enormous rents fixed to them, and which only field-officers and captains could barely afford to pay. The quarters for the subalterns, that is to say, those of low rent (and they were high enough, too) were miserable hovels, some of them dirty, broken-down holes, which were quite disgraceful for so large a garrison.

The cantonment is composed of three long streets running parallel, with others intersecting, and the houses erected in compounds or gardens. The smaller and meaner buildings are situated at one end, while the larger and more respectable ones are located at the other. The streets are narrow and badly constructed, and the entrances to the compounds are more or less broken down; the walls and hedges have large gaps in them, the trees and shrubs overgrown, and watercourses on each side choked up with rubbish and dead leaves.

The fort is situated about a quarter of a mile from cantonment. It is an old Maharatta fortifi-

cation, built entirely of granite, with circular bastions, long curtains and narrow wet ditch; the water of which, being stagnant, threw out a stench sufficient to breed a plague! The houses inside the fort are substantial, but very old. The principal buildings are the palace, a very large pagoda or temple, converted into an arsenal, and the commandant's house, as also the barracks for European troops. I will not, however, trouble the reader by entering into a description of these.

The interior of the fort is kept tolerably clean, though I should say that a residence there must be anything but healthy, owing to the smell arising from the ditch, and from the greatest part of the *fausse-braye* being covered with thick trees, which must, as a matter of course, retain much of the noxious vapours from the water, and which the least puff of wind must waft into the houses.

The hospital for the sick is likewise inside the fort; not a very eligible spot for such an establishment; I should have thought that a clear open atmosphere would have been preferable. A large gang of convicts are also located in one of the bastions. These people are really the filthiest of our race; they live in the most dirty manner possible, adding thereby not a little to the insalubrity of the place. I cannot conceive why they are stationed there; being under civil controul they might be well located at one of the meaner of the civil

stations in the neighbourhood, instead of being confined in a military garrison, converting a fort into a jail.

The public offices are also in the fort, but few, if any, of the staff reside there, the houses in cantonment being preferable, as healthier and cooler; besides, the mosquitoes there are as large as snipe!

The interior of the Vellore fort was the scene of the famous mutiny, a circumstance with which a great portion of my readers must be well acquainted. The barracks in which the European soldiery were so unmercifully massacred are (as before remarked) still standing, and used as public offices. The visitor can to this day see the marks of the dreadful fire of musquetry which was poured in upon the poor fellows from the windows.

I met with an old soldier who related to me the whole of the proceedings of that memorable occurrence. He was one of the few who escaped, and he pointed out to me the bastion in which our gallant countrymen kept the cowardly ruffians at bay, until the arrival of the dragoons from Arcot, under Gillespie. I also met an old pensioned native, who brought me a bullet which he had picked out of one of the beams of the barrack verandah. As I saw bullet marks in every direction, I gave the poor man the credit of telling the truth, and purchased it from him; for this griffinish trick I was of course

laughed at, for the same reason, I suppose, that purchasers of Waterloo relics are ridiculed, when they visit that famous field of battle.

When the mutineers saw that relief had come from so unexpected a quarter, they lost heart and attempted to escape ; some jumped over the ramparts into the ditch, and were either drowned or snapped up by the alligators ; others tried to conceal themselves among the various buildings, while many clambered up the pagoda and trees in the hopes of escaping detection, but all their efforts at concealment were of no avail. The hour of dreadful retaliation had arrived ; the dragoons gave no quarter, the wretched fugitives were sabred without mercy, and those on the pagoda and trees were brought down with the carbine, or pistol ; the marks of the balls are now visible on the pagoda.

What excellent practice this must have been for the dragoons, and with what feelings must they have done their work ! As many of the mutineers as could be collected were driven into a racket or tennis court, and the gallopper guns of the cavalry having been placed in the gallery, were opened upon them with grape, and not a soul of the villains escaped to tell the tale of that dreadful night.

The dead bodies of the unfortunate European soldiers who fell were buried inside the fort and a mound marks the spot where their bones lay ; those of the mutineers were taken out and thrown into

a pit dug for that purpose, in a field shown to this day. The tragical end of one, who it is said had been the unfortunate cause of this mutiny, I have already mentioned at the commencement of this narrative; but I believe that Mysorean influence tended more towards exciting the minds of our native soldiery, than any interference on the part of our officers with their religious prejudices.

It must be borne in mind, that the country was then in a very unsettled state, and that the greater part of southern India had still a hankering after the late dynasty, particularly the Moslem population of the whole of Mysore and the Carnatic, where the late Sultaun Tippoo's power and name kept up the fire of revolt, which was still smouldering, ready to burst out into a blaze at the first favourable opportunity.

At Vellore, the native population was composed, for the greater part, of Moslems. The sultaun's whole harem were confined inside the fort, and it was a well-known fact that hundreds of his late adherents were residing in the *pettah*, or native town. These men were the means of undermining the fidelity of our troops from without, while the women from within were tampering with their allegiance to our government, promising all manner of bribes if they, like good believers, would rid the country of such *Khafirs* (infidels) as the English were !

These were the very people who excited, plotted and contrived the mutiny; while at the same time that they were acting thus basely, they (I mean those abominable old cats the women) were receiving handsome pensions from the hands of the very government whose power they were trying to subvert by their secret intrigues.

The fatal blow, however, which they received by the timely arrival of the dragoons from Arcot, and the subsequent events following their entry into the fort, showed them that however partially successful for a time, they could not make a long stand against their conquerors; their hopes were crushed, and the whole put down ere time could be allowed for their plans being matured or the revolt spread in any other direction, which it most probably would have done had there been the slightest encouragement.

The serious check at Vellore intimidated others who were doubtless preparing similar undertakings. The intentions of many intrigues were nipped in the bud, and the general rise quelled with a powerful hand, though at an enormous sacrifice of life; while however such sacrifice will ever be subject of regret, our government in those days could not but have had every reason to congratulate themselves that matters were not worse, and that they terminated where they did, at the fountain-head.

The “*Mahal Sera*” (or private palace), where

the shrivelled remains of the great Tippoo's Harem reside, is an extensive building, surrounded by a lofty wall, high enough to prevent the entrance by escalade of any daring lover, had there been even encouragement for such an undertaking in the existence of any thing lovely or loveable deserving the attempt; but as there are or were neither youth nor beauty immured within the sacred walls, nothing but some dozen old women, the said high enclosure cannot be considered as being ornamental, or useful. Of the interior of this palace, I know nothing. No vulgar eye has ever pierced the mysteries of that seraglio. None were ever permitted to enter the precincts, excepting the brigadier commanding, under whose charge these state prisoners are kept; the fort adjutant, who goes with him, and the garrison surgeon, who feels the old ladies' pulses and prescribes something *nice* whenever they are indisposed.

The palace is, I believe, a tolerably handsome building, erected by the sultaun himself, or by his father; but it was kept in a very dirty condition, and this is not to be wondered at, for the old women of the Moslems are the most filthy of their sex. Government pay these creatures a certain stipend, which is more than sufficient for their maintenance, the greater part of their salary being expended in donations to a set of villainous "*fahkeers*," (religious mendicants), who reside in the Pettah.

These old ladies are a sad tax to the state; I should say they could have but little cause for regret when their time came for departure from this world, for life must be a burthen to them, living as they have been doing these last forty years and upwards.

There are sentries posted over the two entrance gates of the palace, as also under the walls; and they have strict orders relative to the safe custody of these royal inmates.

By the way, I think, if I recollect right, there are one or two other state prisoners confined in the palace; but in a different part of course. Vellore has long been a famous receptable for turbulent rajahs and nawaubs, as well as for sultauns' wives. The whole are a very troublesome set, particularly the old women, and the sooner they are disposed of the better. I wonder if the old ladies know anything of the treasure in the Nakeenairy Pass.

The commanding-officer of the station had much cause of trouble and annoyance with the ladies. One day the water brought for consumption was bad; another day, the *pawn* leaves were objected to; a third, the meat was not eatable; a fourth, the sentries at night challenged too loudly, and disturbed their slumbers. And then there were frequent petitions against this person, or that; so that the situation of the brigadier in connexion with them, was any thing but a *sinecure*.

There is a building inside the fort appropriated for public worship. What it was formerly I cannot tell exactly, though from the presence of sundry pieces of carved stone, I should suppose that it must have been part of a native temple. It is a great pity that no regular church has been erected at Vellore. A large garrison station, with a tolerable European community, without a church or minister, is a glaring instance of that want of zeal for God's service so peculiarly singular and unaccountable on the part of our rulers. There is a regular Roman Catholic chapel, and also a priest at the place ; but strange to say, neither Protestant church nor clergyman ! Why should this be so ?\*

Marks of cannon shot are seen on the walls outside the fort, as also on the pagoda before-mentioned ; and several parts of the stone parapet have been shot off, or shattered ; the positions of our batteries are also shown in the neighbourhood. The fort is, in some parts of the works, ruinous ; as is the case with the greater number of our fortifications in India. Even at Fort St. George the works are so very *rotten* (if I may so apply the word,) that a gun, fired from an *embrasure*, or "*en barbette*," crumbles the parapet down like sand.

The wet ditch of the fort at Vellore is, as before

\* Since writing the above there has been a small church erected inside the fort, and the chaplain of the district also resides at the place—better late than never.

observed, a very dirty one. The surface of the water is covered with a green slimy substance, from whence arise most unwholesome effluvia. I really wonder that the place continues to be so healthy as it is. The ditch is crossed at one angle of the works by an outer drawbridge, and again by an inner one leading into the body of the place —this last turns upon a pivot, (like the bridges over our canals in England,) and is an excellent contrivance. The ditch is likewise crossed on the other aide by a causeway stretching from one scarp to the other; very narrow, barely sufficient to admit of two persons abreast.

In some parts where there is little or no water in the ditch, the grass and rushes grow long and thick, affording cover for the alligators, which are in great abundance. These monsters were first placed there in the days of Hyder Ally,—at least I believe so, as means of defence against an enemy, and with a view of preventing his prisoners from escaping. He had many confined in Vellore, and the neighbouring forts on the tops of the surrounding hills.

Previously to the famous mutiny just alluded to, and when the European regiment was quartered in the fort, some parts of the defences were sadly in want of repair. The counterscarp of the ditch was ruinous throughout, and the alligators used to creep out of the water on to the glacis, snapping up

unfortunate natives who might be passing. These creatures are cowardly brutes, and nothing alarms them so much as the report of a gun.

I was informed that the soldiers in the fort in those days were aware of this, and discovered that they always avoided that part of the ditch over which the morning and evening guns were fired ; this latter circumstance they found out by throwing a dog into the water, the poor animal swam across and escaped untouched, whereas had it been thrown in at any other point it would have been snapped up immediately.

The soldiers would lower themselves from the ramparts into the waters just under the bastion, exactly as the gun fired at night, swim across the ditch without fear of the alligators, which they knew were not there, scramble up the ruinous counterscarps and steal into the pettah, where they would remain all night and return the following morning in time for the "*réveillée*" gun, swim back and get into their barracks undetected. I cannot possibly vouch for the truth of this ; I repeat it as it was told me ; though it is a fact that Europeans will go through any dangers at all risks for a drink of arrack.

What the sentries in the barracks and on the walls could have been about there is no knowing ; we must suppose that matters were not so strictly arranged in those days as they are now ; probably

a pull at the bottle for the sentries was a sufficient passport backwards and forwards. What could the European sentries have been doing on the night of the mutiny ?

The alligators are very dangerous creatures in the Vellore fort ditch. I have heard of several dreadful accidents happening at different times. I recollect one lamentable occurrence taking place shortly before our arrival. Many of the natives are in the habit of feeding them with live fowls, ducks, sheep, &c. &c., and are very careless how they venture to the edge of the ditch.

It so happened that an unfortunate boy, while crossing the causeway already mentioned, saw a large alligator close to him, and having some bread in his hands, stopped and sat down, with his feet dangling over the side, and amused himself by throwing in pieces of the bread, which the alligator snapped up. Little did the poor wretch know of what was coming !

Another large monster from behind crawled up the embankment, (which was in a dilapidated state in those days, without any water,) and seizing his victim by the hinder part plunged back with him in his jaws. The poor little fellow shrieked and cried in vain. A sentry on one of the bastions heard the cry, and looking through the embrasure beheld the dreadful sight of the wretched boy struggling in the jaws of his formidable destroyer,

while the alligator writhed and twisted violently, mangling his victim most horridly and rendering escape impossible.

There was no help ; the boy could not have been saved ; the sentry called out to the guard, but before anybody came the monster had disappeared with his prey, and all was still ; the only thing visible of the catastrophe being the blood-stains in the grass and discoloured state of the water.

The authorities have oftentimes determined upon destroying these animals, but have been prevented doing so on account of the natives, who hold them in veneration in consequence of their having been placed there by so great a man as the tyrant Hyder.

The presence of a vast Moslem population in the Pettah is also a sufficient reason for their not being injured, and Tippoo's old ladies have declared, that if any of them are destroyed woe would betide those who did the deed. I think them a great nuisance to the place ; and I attribute the stench from the ditch entirely to the alligators being in the water. I see no use whatever in their being preserved, and I should say, that when they are considered objectionable in more ways than one, the prejudice of a Moslem rabble, or the omens of a parcel of old women, ought to be no barriers to their being removed.

The hill-forts commanding the whole of the

garrison are interesting ruins, sad relics of bygone days, well worth the attention of the traveller. The ascent to them is very steep and rugged ; but inspection and the view of the surrounding country amply compensate for the trouble.

One of these forts is famous for a desperate attack made upon it during the war, by the enemy, when held by a handful of Europeans with a few sepoys. The brave defenders of this post were well-nigh being overpowered by numbers, and had it not been for the ready thought of one of them, they would most probably have all been cut up ; as it was, however, it turned out otherwise, for previous to the assault made by the enemy, the defenders cut a deep trench within the walls, which trench they covered over with light twigs ; over these was thrown a layer of earth, and on that again branches of trees or bushes placed to represent an *abbattis*.

The assailants carried the walls, and rushed headlong in, driving the defenders back, who purposely made but a faint resistance, reserving their fire until the expected crisis. Little thinking of the trap laid for them, the enemy leaped upon and over the *abbattis*, and down they went to the bottom of the trench ! The garrison, seeing the success of their scheme, suddenly rallied, drove back the rest at the point of the bayonet, and firing upon those in the pit, very soon got rid of their foes.

This hill fort just alluded to was held as a signal post between Vellore and Arcot, and a strong guard, relieved weekly, used to be sent up for the purpose of furnishing sentries over solitary cells in which were confined European soldiers under sentence of court-martial. I do not know whether such is now the case, but when we were stationed at Vellore there was a particular order, that should the sentry on the hill at any time see any body of troops moving on the open country in the direction of Arcot, he was to wave a white handkerchief, (if he had one, I suppose,) on the point of his bayonet; and the sentry on the walls in the fort below (whose order was to keep his eye fixed on the one above) was instantly to make the same known to the officer on guard.

The other hill forts are curious enough, one in particular has a very remarkable well, cut in the solid rock, the water of which is as cold as if it had been iced; but I suppose the well must by this time be filled with rubbish, and the fortification entirely ruined.

Properly speaking, Vellore should be garrisoned by one European and three native regiments. I say so, because it is an important post, being, according to the opinion of the greatest general of the age, the strongest in southern India—the key, as it were, of the Carnatic, and one which should be as well protected in peace as in war. In addition to

this, the duties of the place are much too severe, (another instance of the hard work our men have to perform,) for the small number kept there now-a-days. The details on duty every day, the out-posts, the frequent call for escorts for one thing or another, the constant tiresome drills and parades, are indeed too much for one corps, and the skeleton of another. Officers and men are worked off their legs, and the heat of the place is such, that I am astonished they do not all get burned to death by it ! Vellore always was, and always will be, a hard worked station.

The troops composing the garrison have ever something to do beyond the common routine; indeed, there is no rest for any of them. If there were no regimental drill, there was sure to be brigade drill. If the men were not on duty once in three days, some fresh guard or escort must be ordered to cause an increase of men for the daily roster. In addition to the common work we had to do, there was a jail full of villainous convicts to look after, and that duty I have always looked upon as a disgrace to the name of soldier; who ought to be exempted from doing such dirty work. If an efficient police were kept up by the civil authorities, there would not exist any necessity for the military being made drudges of.

At Vellore, we had three regiments in garrison, including our own. The officers were all good fel-

lows. The messes were always entertaining ; and our commandant-brigadier was the very man to render himself liked and respected. He was hospitable and kind to everybody ; gentlemanly in his manners, and courteous in the extreme, to all around him. He was a first-rate soldier, and consequently a smart officer ; every thing, therefore, in his command was done in proper style.

His lady was agreeable, and made herself much liked by her hospitable behaviour towards people passing through the station, whom she always invited to her house. Many have been the delightful parties I have gone to at that house, and many the nice comfortable dinners I have partaken of when on main guard.

The brigadier's staff were a proper set ; well up to their work, gentlemanly and accomodating in the extreme. Staff-officers have it in their power to be so, or otherwise, whenever they like. Some there are, who give a great deal of useless trouble and vexation, which gain them nothing but dislike and ridicule.

Staff-officers should bear in mind always, that they wear red coats, and are consequently not a bit better, as regards the profession, than those less fortunate than themselves ; but I regret to say, that such is not always borne in the recollection ; and the *élève* no sooner doffs the regimental costume and dons the gold-laced cap, than a complete change comes over the individual, who forgets his

former condition in life, and adopts a line of conduct quite at variance with good breeding and gentlemanly bearing ; which proves the shallow brain and uneducated mind, and renders him, in the eyes of his quondam associates, an object of scorn and derision.

The “*suaviter in modo cum fortiter in re,*” sits better on a soldier, whatever his condition or situation in life, than that presumptuous coxeombry which we so frequently meet with amongst those in office ; and I am only astonished that such people are tolerated in the circles of society ; yet are they looked upon as its leading members. But I do not make this remark in regard to the staff in general ; far be it from me to do so. I know many a noble fellow who is on the staff ; men who are an honour to their profession, and who would not do or say an unkind thing on any consideration ; and I am happy in being able to add, that men of this description predominate, while those who render themselves obnoxious are only to be met with occasionally, showing a remarkable contrast between the polished gentleman and the low-bred “*par-vénu.*”

The general society of Vellore was like that in most of our Indian stations, where we meet the same people, and see the same faces day after day, with little or no varying, to scare away the dull monotony of inactivity. The ride or drive in the

heat of the sun, to visit the few ladies composing the female portion of our circle ; the three o'clock dinner table ; or the evening gallop up to the old race course, to breathe the hot air which comes down upon us from the neighbouring rocks ; all this was stupid enough after all. Sometimes, an enterprising married man would hazard an evening party, to try and get up a little gaiety ; the ladies found it too hot to dance, and the gentlemen would not attempt to dance at all, so between the two sexes that also was dull work.

People at Vellore in those days, had no spirit in them, excepting, by the way, at the messes, and there the jolly bachelors used to enjoy each other's society, and to live in first-rate style. But I took no delight in those noisy meetings. Smoking and drinking appeared to me to be but poor satisfaction, particularly with the concomitant evils of a sick head-ache the next morning ; such being the case, and for want of something better to do, I would wend my way home after my evening ride, have a cold bath, enjoy the delights of a nice cup of tea, and go to bed at times so early as eight o'clock. Vellore certainly was a very stupid place in the year 1835—at least I thought so.

The house I occupied was, properly speaking, one for a captain ; but, as it was large and commodious, I took a partner into the concern, in the shape of my fellow-griffin, who was ensign next

below me, and for whom I have had the greatest regard ever since we first knew each other. He had his failings, doubtless, for some of which he used often to get heartily laughed at ; but he was a good fellow at the bottom, ("little and good,") with as brave a heart as ever palpitated in a human body.

I always made it a rule to have a good house to whatever station I went, preferring thereby being comfortable to saving a few rupees by inhabiting a miserable hovel not fit for a dog to live in. It is a mistaken economy, and very foolish, to think that there is anything saved by occupying a bad house ; indeed, quite the contrary, as far as money is concerned, and doubly so in regard to health and comfort, to say nothing of the respectability.

There is no luxury so great in India as a large airy house, with open, cleanly grounds surrounding it ; and there is nothing more conducive to ill health than the living in cramped-up quarters, with small enclosures and a dirty compound. We had a palace to live in, and contrived to make ourselves comfortable and happy. My chum and I got on remarkably well, though we frequently fought like cat and dog, and vowed vengeance at each other ; but these fracas did not matter much, and we always found ourselves the better friends after.

Our mansion was furnished very nicely. I remember I was fool enough to send down to Madras

for a whole lot of furniture, which I had to pay for most heavily. In addition to this trick, I was guilty of another far worse. I wrote down for a quantity of plate, little thinking of the consequences, and never dreaming that the supply was not of the slightest use to me! I considered it incumbent on me to have some plate; so, like a real "*Johnny Raw*," wrote to the principal silversmiths at Madras for a set of spoons, forks and so forth, that might have done for a colonel. I cannot now imagine what could have induced me to commit such an extravagance, but it was so, and I was a griffin and no mistake; so take warning my young readers, never write for plate or furniture to Madras—the expense is dreadful.

It is a very bad plan for young fellows to burden themselves with silver things; they are sure to be stolen. The only meal that a bachelor takes at his own quarters is his breakfast; much plate is not requisite for such an important ceremony, and, if he happens to have a friend, that friend either brings his own, or what is wanted can easily be borrowed from the mess-house. But griffins disdain to borrow anything (but money), and that is the reason they do such things as buy plate. We will, however, say no more on the subject, but wend on our way merrily to the next chapter.

Experience inculcates many a lesson, and I would fain hope that whatever I may have had of

it has given me an insight into the character of the world we live in, and that whatsoever I have advanced (written as it has been from experience) will serve as useful lessons to my younger friends, for whose sole advantage and benefit I am now putting these pages together ; and if I may have said enough to do good (where good is intended), I shall not only consider myself particularly fortunate in having opened the eyes of the younger portion of the army to what they have to undergo in first commencing their career in a strange land, but thank my stars that, by a perusal of this book, they will not be such great griffins as I was, when I first put on a red coat, in the year 1833.

## CHAPTER VI.

Summoned to Arnee on Court Martial Duty—The Barracks—A few Observations on Courts Martial—Three Weeks at Arnee—The Hospitality we received—On the Feelings which exist between the Queen's and Company's Officers—Return to Head Quarters—A practical Joke—The Adjutant's Cheetah again—The Barber's Son—His narrow Escape—Execution of the Cheetah—A Hurdle Race—Sporting Dogs in India—Fox Hunting near Vellore—A "Bobbery Pack"—Embarrassing Visit of the Adjutant—A Word on the Toilette.

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SHORTLY after our arrival at Vellore, we received orders to furnish a detail of officers for a court-martial, which was to assemble at Arnee, for the trial of two men, who had deserted from H. M. —st Foot, while on service in the Tenasserim provinces. Our colonel, interpreter, and I, three of us, were directed to proceed on this duty. We had about twenty-five miles to go, and as the road was tolerably good the colonel drove there in his buggy, and took me with him.

As we were not certain whether there would be any accommodations prepared for us, we took our tents, and had them pitched inside the fort (or rather what remained of it), close to the officers' barracks. On our arrival, we reported ourselves in due form, and were very hospitably received by the residents. An invitation was sent us to be guests at the mess, during our stay at the station, and the commandant had his house open to us for our meals, whenever we wished to partake of them with him ; thus we had every reason to be gratified, and anticipated a pleasant time of it with our new acquaintances.

Arnee is a station for one European regiment. Why it was fixed upon for such a purpose, I know not. Our rulers are supposed to be the best judges in such and all other matters, but I cannot help saying that it is the common opinion of all military men, that a worse could not have been selected for the locating European troops. The barracks are situated inside the ruins of an old dilapidated fort, the walls of which were recently blown up purposely, with a view of rendering the place a little cooler ; hot enough it is in all conscience. The Europeans die like rotten sheep at Arnee, and more particularly so during the hot weather, when either fever, or cholera, is sure to break out among them.

The barracks are badly built, badly ventilated, and so low that the heat inside must render them

altogether ill adapted for the men. The quarters for the officers are miserable accommodations, being constructed with bomb-proof roofs ; the rooms are so small, that there is barely space for one person, and two were frequently located in the same compartment, which was thereby so hot and confined that I was surprised they contrived to exist.

The whole range of quarters are pretty nearly upon a par in point of size and accommodation. Those for the senior officer are, however, somewhat better, though they were poor enough ; and notwithstanding that the officers are obliged to go to much expense to render them at all tenable, still they are wretched habitations for any one, and more so for officers and gentlemen.

The married soldiers and their families reside separate from the barracks, in a *purchery*, forming of itself a small village. These cottages the poor men have to erect themselves at their own expense, and they are really very comfortable-looking and tidy, furnished and laid out according to their homely ideas, with a little bit of garden in front, and enclosed by green or white palings. I thought the cottages much preferable to the hot ovens in which the officers resided.

There is no church at Arnee. Service is occasionally performed by the incumbent at Arcot, where there is a very substantial church, with but few Europeans, the troops being composed of only one

native regiment of cavalry, while at Arnee the garrison was entirely of Europeans. This is a strange arrangement the reader will allow. Arcot, or Vellore, would have been better adapted in every respect for European troops, and whoever selected Arnee could not have had much discrimination or consideration for the health of our poor countrymen, who are located there from time to time, and our rulers of the present day would do well were they to abandon the station altogether.

Troops at Arnee are of no use whatever. Were they placed in a more centrical position for service when required, it would be far better; and, were a cooler situation selected for them, the advantages would be greater than people imagine. But the health and convenience of our soldiery seem to be subjects of secondary consideration; were it otherwise, we should not be seeing European regiments located in such abominable hot ovens as Arnee, and one or two others that I could mention.

The trial lasted for a considerable time, and we were detained for upwards of three weeks. It was a tedious affair, as are indeed the generality of courts-martial, and being buckled up in full uniform every day in the hot weather is anything but pleasant. However, we ought not to grumble, for we are well paid for all we do, and think a court-martial much too serious a thing for any portion of its importance to be done away with. The two

culprits turned out to be disreputable characters, were found guilty, and dealt with accordingly.

This was the first court-martial I had ever been on, and I was much amused to see the indifference with which the members generally treated the matter under investigation. The only men who attended to its progress were the president and judge-advocate; almost all the rest were employed in reading newspapers, or novels. I naturally asked myself the question, how these officers could in justice to themselves, or the unfortunate prisoners, be so neglectful of the solemn oath which they each individually made, that they would well and truly, and to the best of their skill and judgment, administer justice in the case before them? How can their attention be diverted from the perusal of newspapers, or books, to the matter for which they were assembled?

I put these questions to myself in my younger days, and I have put them since, for I observed, as I grew older in the service, that the same practice more or less prevailed in every court-martial room; and I ask these same questions now, in order that the reader may see what a trivial matter is made of a court-martial by many of its members, after they have taken an oath on the Bible, which binds them most solemnly to a strict attention to what is going on, and to an impartial judgment,

according to the evidence which they are supposed to hear.

What glaring irregularities are these ! And how incumbent it is upon the seniors to put them down ! That such do continue is a fact, and no one can deny it ; and I am only astonished that presidents of courts-martial permit them, and that judge-advocates do not interfere with their advice, in order that members may be made to attend to their duty, instead of acting like schoolboys in reading newspapers and such like trash.

The inattention is the same whatever the case, be it robbery, mutiny, desertion, murder, or any other crime. All that the members think of is the newspaper, or novel ; and what a *bore* it is for them to be obliged to sit so long. The case under trial is of secondary importance ; they care not what becomes of the prisoner ; they have no patience with him ; the sooner the rascal is flogged, dismissed, transported or hanged, the better for them : they will get off the irksome duty the sooner. Many is the member who has given his opinion as to the prisoner's guilt, or innocence, without knowing what he is saying ; he is generally biassed by what is said by those before him, and has his thoughts probably fixed on something else all the time that he may be passing sentence of death, or transportation for life, on some poor miserable fellow-creature.

I do not mean to argue that every member of a court-martial is so culpably negligent, but I think I am not far wrong in saying that the evil does exist, and I say further, that it behoves the president, or any senior officer, to check the irregularity. Why do they not do so? Because they would avoid being considered particular by their juniors, at the expense of their own consciences; for, may I ask, is not the very circumstance of tacitly permitting such proceedings, a breach of the oath they have taken, that they will *well* and truly do justice, and are they doing justice if they allow such things?

We experienced every kindness and hospitality from the gallant —st Foot, during our stay. We dined daily at mess, and always finished the day at the quarters of one of the officers. The corps was a very fine one, and everything connected with it was in capital order. I do not remember ever having seen before or since a finer body of men, or a better drilled battalion. When under arms they made a beautiful show, and when in motion they were superb! Their marching in line was magnificent, and their wheeling in column like the swinging of a gate! I wish every regiment of the line drilled as well as they did.

What they do now, I cannot tell. They are at present at home, where I believe they are broken up into detachments, when drilling is not much

attended to. There is nothing like a sojourn in India for getting a regiment into first-rate order. The corps I am more particularly alluding to had been a considerable time in the East, and had been much in contact with the native army. They had become acquainted with and much attached to many of our officers, and they were general favourites.

In former days, there used to exist an unhappy feeling on the part of our brethren in arms of the royal troops towards our officers; a feeling which used to give rise to many disagreements, quarrels and petty bickerings unbecoming in the extreme, and such as should not have been permitted. The royal officers fancied themselves (and some do so now too—a mistaken notion!) superior to those of the Indian army, and consequently gave themselves many foolish airs, which engendered bad feeling, and did them no good; quite forgetting that our officers were every bit as well-born, bred and educated as themselves.

We hold the same commissions, and serve the same cause, that of our sovereign and country; they had consequently no reason whatever for arrogating to themselves any superiority. But such thoughtless, boyish nonsense scarcely exists now-a-days. Regiments on first coming to India have however, even to this day, strange and unaccountable fancies regarding company's officers. These

whimsical notions originate from ignorance only; but, when they find out that they are thrown amongst men of superior attainments, men of talent and education, gentlemen in every sense of the word, they soon change their tone, and adopt a proper line of conduct, and the two services (if I may call them so) pull very well together.

There is not (nor has there ever been) a regiment from England that has not always regretted quitting India, when the order has arrived for their return home. And there are many reasons for such regret. Connexions and friends are formed, which render separation painful, and moreover, the poor in pocket have superior means of existing in this country than in their native land, where living is now-a-days so dreadfully expensive; and I know many who exchange into other regiments, in preference to accompanying their former ones to their own country.

An old officer on first landing in India is a greater greenhorn than even one of our cadets. He cannot therefore do better than make friends with one of us. The assistance that the former derives from the advice of the latter is of the greatest consequence; and without it, the Queen's officer cannot get on at all; at least in nine cases out of ten. He contrives to fall into all manner of troubles and difficulties; he is cheated and robbed by his rascally servants, and leads a life of misery

and discomfort enough to disgust any one, and make him wish himself back in England, quartered in some country town on his paltry pittance of so much a day, and nothing over.

To see a corps fresh landed from England is sufficient to excite pity, and to induce people to come forward to do the needful; but some there are amongst the new-comers who will not condescend to apply to anybody for aid; and it is perfectly ridiculous for such individuals to imagine that because they belong to the royal army they are far above seeking advice or assistance from a company's officer; they cannot get on without it. If they attempt to do so, they go to the dogs very fast indeed. I do not mean to say that it is matter of difficulty to everybody to do without the helping hands of older residents; but as I said before, taking them altogether, the red-coats, fresh from the shores of their own country, are the veriest greenhorns that ever placed their feet on the burning sands of India.

Now the officers of the regiment at Arnee, were a proper set, (and there are many corps like them in India); they knew how to appreciate the friendship and society of those of our service; the consequences were, that they made themselves liked by everybody, wherever they went. But I have met with one or two regiments since I have been in the country, who have established it a rule, as it

were, to have as little as possible to say to company's officers : the greater fools they, say I.

It sometimes does happen, that the *head* of a Queen's regiment is the cause of ill-feeling and disagreements. In such a case, the sooner the poor man is superseded the better ; for, he who sets so bad an example to his officers, must be an egregious blockhead, not fit to command, and far better adapted to "waste his sweetness on the desert air" of some miserable village in his native country, and eke out his existence on the few pounds shillings and pence of his half-pay.

The court-martial over, we bade farewell to our kind hosts of that splendid regiment, and wended our way back again to Vellore, halting mid-way at a "choultry," (or native resting place,) to have some shooting. The surrounding country abounded in small game, hare, partridge, quail, and rock-pigeon ; so I wrote to Vellore, and invited two of my brother officers to join our party, and a right merry set we formed. We shot all day, and dined in the evening, after which we sat smoking and chatting till bed-time.

I shall never forget a trick which the old colonel played off upon my chum (who had also come out to us) on this occasion. My young friend was very fond of smoking, and we had received a present of some very good cheroots, made at Trichi-

nopoly, (a place famous for them; who has not heard of the "Trichies"?) some of which we presented to him, as something above the common.

The colonel had very slyly pulled out the reed from one of them, (placed inside to admit of a free draught of smoke,) and had put gun-powder half-way up, instead. The cheroot was a large one, "a horse-keeper," as it is termed, (why so, I cannot tell,) about as thick and as large as a good sized wax-candle. He was very proud of this cheroot, and lighted it looking very grave and at the same time very happy.

Suddenly the powder ignited, and gave the poor fellow such a shock, that he jumped up with a loud yell, upsetting table, chairs and all, and calling out that he was murdered. The joke was too much of a good thing, and he might have been seriously hurt; but, fortunately, no harm was done, save and except a slight burn on the roof of his mouth.

The afflicted-one bore his affliction marvellously well, and was very good-natured about it, but he vowed vengeance upon the colonel, who at the moment of explosion enjoyed the fun heartily; but felt much grieved when he ascertained the mischief he had done; however, the matter passed off very well indeed, and we arrived at Vellore in high feather, after an absence of a month, and returned to our monotonous drudgery of main-guard and drill, as usual.

There was capital fox-hunting in the vicinity of Vellore, and more particularly about a village six or eight miles on the Chittoor road. One of our officers kept some beautiful greyhounds, which he had bred himself, and with these he used to course the foxes. This may appear to the inexperienced a very unsportmanlike thing, but a little explanation will, probably, serve to do away with such an impression. Many attempts have been made to introduce fox-hounds, harriers and beagles into the country, but without success in any one way. Hundreds and thousands of these dogs have been sent out to India at enormous expense, (the reader must bear in mind that I am alluding more immediately to Madras,) and thousands of pounds have been spent in various ways in trying to keep up the necessary establishment for their care and management; but every attempt has been a complete failure.

The dogs cannot live in India. No sooner does a pack of them reach Madras, than they die by twos and threes a day. Few, if any, survive, and those that do, become mangy, and are of no use whatever. I have seen several packs of hounds at the Presidency, and have observed them at work in a morning. Their movements were very heavy and sluggish, and after all did not appear to me to afford the sport or pleasure which we experience

at home. The dogs get knocked up in a short time, and it not unfrequently happens that several die in the field from exhaustion.

Foxes are a scarcity in the neighbourhood of Madras; so that the only animal they can have any sport with, is the jackall, which is very soon run into and killed. Some of these creatures are very bold and hardy, and show desperate fight, biting and maiming the dogs severely; they can only be managed by good bull-dogs and terriers.

The fox-hounds, harriers and beagles not being then equal either to the climate or the work they have to do, and these animals seldom or ever reaching an up-country station, we are obliged to have recourse to greyhounds, which we breed sometimes entirely of English blood, but more frequently with a cross between an English and an Arab. The thorough-bred English dog is too heavy for this country, but the English blood in the Arab crossed, is a capital one for coursing.

The foxes which are hunted or coursed in this manner are very swift of foot, and at times give capital sport. I have often seen them killed single-handed by one of our dogs. They are generally to be found in grain-fields, or along the bed of a dry nullah, or water-course, whither they steal away on the slightest noise, or sign of danger. I have several times scared a fox while out snipe-

shooting, and have seen the sly villain scampering off with a leveret in his mouth.

I remember giving chase to master reynard one day, while I was searching for a partridge which I had lost ; I saw him with my lost bird in his jaws sneak off to my right, and immediately followed hoping to regain my prize. I shouted after the thief to no purpose, and at last tried if a shot would bring him to his bearings, thinking it quite lawful to give him a taste of what, according to the laws of sporting, he was not entitled to, for carrying off that, which according to the rights of man, was *bonâ fide* mine own property.

The shot acted as I had wished ; there was an exchange of compliments ; reynard felt the one I had bestowed upon him.

There was also at Vellore a "*bobbery-pach*," as it is called. This strange denomination is applied to as strange a medley of the canine species. The pack is composed of dogs of all sorts and sizes ; half-bred greyhounds, terriers, mongrel-curs, half-spaniels, poligars, parriahs, and half-bull, half-setters, and so forth. With such a combination, it is difficult for the inexperienced sportsman to conceive what can be its use.

But, the "*bobbery pack*" afford good sport. They are fine at a run after jackall, or "*dummall-gaudy*," alias hyæna ; they will attack a village pig,

or chase bagged hare. They are up to any fun, and really I have seen some very good runs with them, far better than with Madras foxhounds. Almost every station has a "*bobbery pack*," each member of the hunt contributing his share towards increasing the number of dogs.

## CHAPTER VII.

Hospitality in India—Bison-Shooting among the Hills—A strange Robbery—Officers detached to Poonamullee—The March thither—Adventure in crossing a River—A Journey by Moonlight—Remarks on the time of moving Troops in India—Arrival at Poonamullee.

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VELLORE is the great thoroughfare for travellers coming down from Bangalore, Bellary and all other stations situated in that direction. People were, therefore, continually passing through, sometimes by themselves, and at others in twos and threes; thereby putting the hospitality of the residents frequently to the test, some staying for a few hours, and others for two or three days. The kind-hearted and hospitable brigadier set us all a good example, there was seldom a day but what he had somebody at his house and table.

As I have before observed, India is the place where we see genuine hospitality displayed. The traveller is always sure to find a welcome wherever

he goes ; he has every attention paid him, and he feels himself as much at home in the house of a person whom he has never seen before, as in that of his own brother.

The neighbouring hills, some five or six miles from Vellore, abounded with game of every description. We had never heard previously to our coming, that any thing was to be found deserving attention ; but our worthy adjutant, a thorough-bred sportsman, often cast a longing eye at their appearance, being confident in his own mind that large game was to be had among them. The older residents laughed at the idea, because they had never heard or known of any having been killed there, adding that nobody had ever been up the hills, and that the only large game ever shot were antelope and jungle goat, which sometimes do come down upon the plains, and destroy the grain in the fields at the foot of the hills. The natives never ventured ; they could not, consequently, give any information, so our keen sportsman had it all his own way, and resolved to go and see for himself, and be satisfied.

The adjutant and another officer, therefore, went up, and, after an absence of some two or three days, succeeded in finding a whole herd of bison, one or two of which they were lucky enough to bring down with their rifles, though it was not till after very severe and indefatigable exertions that they

were able to come within shot of them. They returned home, highly delighted with their excursion, and displayed as trophies, to the wondering eyes of the people in cantonments, two huge carcasses, one of a young bull, and the other of a full grown cow.

So elated were these two worthies with their success, that they resolved on another trial, and this time went better prepared and equipped for a lengthened campaign. During their wanderings, they came upon a small village inhabited by a wild-looking set of people. The village was situated on one of the hills, and the natives appeared astonished at seeing Europeans. Two or three of them offered themselves as huntsmen and guides to show the haunts of the game. These fellows they paid well, as they received much useful information from them; one, a very intelligent man, was constituted the "*meer shikar*," (or chief huntsman,) upon a fixed salary, and it was his duty to give every assistance, and to bring news of the movements of the herds of bison which he knew were in the neighbourhood.

The two adventurers cleared a patch of jungle in an eligible situation, and at a suitable distance from the village, where they erected a temporary bungalow, (or I should call it, hut,) of mud walls and a thatched roof, consisting of three or four rooms, with small out offices.

This was formally constituted the *hunting-box* of

the party, and here they had brought from cantonments sundry articles of camp furniture all in the rough, and which was duly placed in charge of the huntsman, who had to look after the building, and was mightily pleased with his situation. His masters armed him with an old "flint and steel," and regularly equipped him with powder-flask, shot-belt, and so forth; he finally proved himself a faithful fellow, and in every way worthy of his important office.

Many were the trips which old J—— B—— made to "*Dimhutty*" (as he called his seat in the hills; so termed after a beautiful locality of that name, sacred to hunting remembrance in the Neilgherries, where he had resided for some time many years back;) and many the daring feat he performed.

I do not think that "*Dimhutty*" was ever again frequented after we left Vellore. The poor old *meer shikar's* occupation was gone, when his kind, good master quitted the place; however, he had presented to him the cottage and all its appurtenances, besides receiving a character as being one of the best "*shikarees*" (huntsmen,) in that neighbourhood.

Vellore abounded in thieves of a variety of descriptions. Some there were who robbed in the bazaars; others, who restricted their operations to the lines of the regiments; while others again only

paid nocturnal visits to the officers' quarters. What the local police could have been about there was no knowing.

Our adjutant was one who suffered. He lost his rifle and a brace of pistols, and could not imagine what had become of them. The loss was duly reported to the police authorities, and every search made without success. At last B—, somehow or other, heard that it was probable the missing articles might have been thrown into the well in front of his house; and, sure enough, after the well had been dived into, the missing things were found rusted and damaged of course, but who could have played him such a scurvy trick it was impossible to tell, though we suspected that the rascal must have been one of his servants who had lately been discharged for misbehaviour, and who must have adopted that method of revenge upon his master.

Two other officers of ours had visits from these villains. One had his writing desk taken away and its contents rifled. The other, however, happened to awake on hearing some noise, and rushed into his bath-room, sword in hand, just in time to see his friends making a retreat through the window. He was after them in an instant. One more active than his companion contrived to escape; the other was caught by the leg as he was attempting to climb over the wall, and, after receiving sundry progs with the sword, was pulled back and secured, the rascal roaring with the pain and fright.

Both these gents were discarded servants; indeed, the generality of thieves in military stations are such, and I have known people robbed of all their property by individuals whom they had formerly employed, and who have known the whereabouts the different things are to be found.

I had been comfortably settled at Vellore for about six or seven months, when my chum and I suddenly received orders to prepare for immediate movement with our respective companies down to Poonamullee, a station about seventy miles off, and close to Madras. We made every preparation for our march, and received a long lecture of good advice from our worthy colonel (with whom we were both great favourites), and started on the morning of the third day after the arrival of the order.

The captain who was to command the detachment was detained at Vellore, on court-martial duty; the immediate charge, therefore, devolved on me, as next senior officer; the first time I had been detached from regimental head-quarters, with two hundred men under my command. I constituted my chum my adjutant and personal staff, issued all my orders, and started for Arcot, that being the first stage of our journey down towards the Presidency.

Arcot is about fifteen miles from Vellore, and there is *en route* a wide sandy bed of a river to be

crossed, at about five miles from that station ; a heavy pull for men (and cattle particularly), who sink up to their ankles in sand every step they take. I am making mention of this river, because it reminds me of a laughable occurrence which took place while we were crossing it. The sun was very hot at the time, it being past ten o'clock, and every one was knocked up with the heat.

Midway, between either bank, there was a beautiful stream of water, about a foot deep, or perhaps a little more, running through the sand, and looking most invitingly cool. As we waded across, the men stooped and drank to refresh themselves, and our horses likewise lowered their heads and partook of the beverage ; during this, my brute played me his old trick, by lying down, and, before I was aware of his intention, he was on his knees, and rolled with me into the water ! This was not a very agreeable position to be in ; there I lay helpless, with one leg under the body of my Bucephalus, spluttering and struggling to disengage myself, the water running over me, and I just able to keep my head out of it ; otherwise, I might have been drowned, shallow as was the stream, to say nothing of the chances I had of getting my brains kicked out by the floundering brute which played me the trick.

Had it not been for some of the men, who pricked the horse with their bayonets and made him get up,

I know not how I should have fared: as it was, I had a thorough soaking, to the no small amusement of my chum, who stood on the other side laughing immoderately. I need not say that I was a little chagrined at the bad beginning I had made, but otherwise the cool sousing I had undergone was very refreshing. I ought to have known better than to have allowed my Rosinante to drink in the way I did; the narrow escape I had on a former occasion ought to have put me on my guard against similar proceedings on his part.

We did not march into Arcot until past eleven o'clock. I remember it was on Sunday, and the church-bells were ringing for service. We heard the sounds summoning us to the house of prayer, but neither of us went. What extraordinary indifference? I had not been inside a church for many months, nay, for nearly two years, and now that I had an opportunity I did not even give it a thought.

Arcot is too well known in the history of southern India to require much description from me. The old town and famous fort, Raneepettah, which were so gallantly defended by Clive, with his handful of brave Europeans and sepoys, are situated at some distance from the cantonments, which are well laid out and clean. There are barracks for two cavalry regiments, and one, I believe, for infantry, though there is only one cavalry corps stationed now at the place.

The church is a neat building in the modern style of architecture, and stands by itself, on a rising ground; what the interior is, I am ashamed to say I cannot tell, for I never entered it. In former days, Arcot always boasted of a regiment of European cavalry, and, at times, corps of European infantry, were there located. The church was then of the greatest use; but as it has since been arranged, that only one native cavalry corps should hold the place, the congregation must be very small, and the church seldom opened. What a pity it is that government should expend so much money in forming cantonments for European troops, and then desert them!

As we had arrived so late in the day, and had had such a sultry march of it, I determined to start earlier in future, so as to get to our encampment before the sun was up: I therefore ordered the drums for the next start to be beaten at half past two and three o'clock, which time, according to my calculation, would bring us to our stage at about half past seven. After an early tea and supper, we both retired to our tents, and were soon comfortably asleep. I remember it was a beautiful moonlight night, and the air delightfully cool (it was then early in March).

I happened to awake on hearing the sentry challenge, and, putting on my slippers, went outside to see what o'clock it was. I was somehow convinced

in my own mind that it must be fully half past two in the morning, time to be preparing for moving; I therefore roused the drummer, who was slumbering in my tent, and ordered him to beat the *générale* forthwith.

This was done, the men turned out, and the families began to pack, though I fancied, somehow or other, that it was very strange they had not already commenced moving. However, I did not give that a second thought, but directed my *aid-de-camp* to get the men under arms, and have their tents struck and started in a quarter of an hour. I never would allow the tent men longer time than that; smart fellows should have their canvass down, packed, and marched off in less space, if they are worth anything; and I invariably made it a rule, in all duty matters, to occupy as little time as possible in the performance, always taking care that every little item was correctly performed and in good order. I never permitted any dilly-dallying, talking, or wrangling. Whenever men had anything to go through, they were made to do their work in perfect silence, and with steadiness.

On this occasion, the soldiery fell in armed and accoutred, the tents were disposed of in a shorter time than that allowed, and in less than half an hour from the beating of my first drum, the encampment was clear and every soul in motion. What a delightful march we had of it, too! The

most delightful I have ever made. We had a bright moonlight all the way, and the air was sharp and cold, so that we moved along right merrily.

I observed to my comrade that it was getting daylight very slowly. He coincided in the remark, but said nothing more, for the fellow was very drowsy, and was taking a comfortable nap in my buggy, which was following in rear of our little column. I happened to see our medico riding in rear also, and made the same observation to him; he replied, "I am not at all surprised, sir, at its getting daylight so slowly. When we started from Arcot, it was barely half past twelve o'clock!"

"No wonder, then, that daylight is not yet on us!"

"There is no harm done," said the apothecary, "though perhaps you are not aware, sir, that marching too early is likely to be attended with serious consequences."

"How so?" inquired I, "pray explain yourself. I always imagined that moving in the cool air was preferable to the heat of the sun."

"As far as the marching in the cool of the morning is concerned, sir," said he, "you are right; but the exposing the men and followers to the cold damp air of the night, with the dew falling like rain, is liable to bring on fever and dysentery, and very often cholera, particularly in moving through an unhealthy country; but, in the present instance,

where the men are in good trim, and clad in their cloaks, as you now have them, there is no risk."

"Well, doctor," said I, "it is satisfactory to know that I did right in making the fellows take out their cloaks and wear them; they have kept themselves warm thereby, and prevented their accoutrements from getting soiled by the dust and dew, which latter is indeed falling heavily, I see," added I, wringing the water off my cap; "I have never observed such dew before."

This short conversation with the worthy apothecary gave me an excellent hint, and I may here observe, with all due deference to superior authority, that the time for moving troops so early in the morning as they do, exposed to the cold and damp air, on empty stomachs, and after having (the greater part of them) had little or no rest during the night, without anything warm before starting, in the shape of a dram of good spirits, or a hot cup of coffee, is in my humble opinion objectionable.

If instead of starting at so early an hour, the troops and followers were to be allowed to sleep quietly and undisturbed in their tents or pals, with a comfortable breakfast on rising, and a good substantial meal in the middle of the day, and then march in the afternoon, the change would be a great advantage. The men would then have had the benefit of a good night's sleep, the strengthen-

ing effects of two meals, upon which they would be able to go through the fatigues of a march, without any danger, or risk of sickness; but march them early in the morning, when they are wearied for want of rest, the mind as well as the body harassed with anxiety about their families, the latter weakened by the meagreness of fare, and nothing to eat previous to moving; march them in that manner, and it will be matter of surprise if they are able to undergo the subsequent fatigues of a twelve or fifteen miles' journey (armed and accoutred as they are), without their strength failing, and diseases of a frightful nature breaking out and carrying off our best and bravest men.

I am not an advocate myself for early marching, either of European or native troops. The objection raised to moving in the evenings is, the heat before starting and the lateness of the hour before an encampment can be formed and the men and families settled at the next stage. Where there is a large body of followers, I admit that such may be the case, but I think that the drawback could be easily remedied by a little good management.

In the first place, were I in command of a body of troops, I would, instead of overworking men and cattle by long stages, divide those stages into two and go just one-half, which would take about three hours at the utmost, and that would bring the men to the end of their journey a good hour or more

before dark, leaving ample time for baggage and followers to be settled and comfortable with their bivouac fires a-light and their pots boiling for supper before the night sets in.

In the second place, I would curtail the time occupied in striking and pitching the tents, and in packing and starting the baggage. And this can only be done by rigid discipline among those who are appointed for that duty, viz. the tent-lascar department. I attribute the slowness with which their work is performed entirely to their laziness, and a consequent want of smartness. Natives cannot, or rather will not, work without talking, wrangling and fighting among themselves, and that is the reason why they are so much slower than any other human beings. A sepoy must have his abuse and his quarrel, or he is not satisfied.

All this in the case of camp-people ought to be checked, and, while striking or setting up tents, the lascars should do what they have to do in perfect silence, and they should be practised so as to get through their work by timing, and any slowness should be punished. A few examples would soon make the whole expert, and, in order to encourage smartness, the commanding-officer should detach small fatigue parties from among the bachelors, say about ten or fifteen men, for the express purpose of assisting the tent-lascars in pitching their canvass; they ought to be sent on in advance with the tents in

fatigue-dress, leaving their arms and accoutrements to be carried by their companies ; this fatigue party should be under a smart non-commissioned officer, who will keep order, and see that the work is done within the prescribed period, and I will warrant that there would be no time lost, as is now the case, in useless delay and irregularities, such as fighting and abusing.

Let an encampment be begun to strike tents at two o'clock, for instance ; half an hour is ample time for every tent, baggage-cart, or bullock to be moved off, which should be done by sound of bugle, or beat of drum ; all laggards behind must be severely punished, and I do not think there will be many such laggards beyond once or twice.

Let the baggage and followers have a good start of two hours, and then let the troops follow, marching them at four or half-past four o'clock ; this arrangement would allow the former to push on, and I venture to say, that by the time the latter arrived at the next stage, the baggage, tents, and followers, would have already reached, and the greater part (if not all) of the tents have been pitched ready for the men, and every thing over by dark. I really do not see why such should not be the case.

This mode of proceeding would, I think, be far better than that of marching in the morning, with the drawbacks already detailed ; and I am also of

opinion, that if troops were to be moved in smaller bodies, and consequently diminishing the number of camp-followers, the plan would be a better one. It would give more room for encamping, (the spaces in the generality of stages allotted for encampments are confined and badly selected,) the supplies from the villages would be better, for more reasons than one; there would be more cleanliness, and consequently less probability of disease.

People may say what they like to the contrary; I have remarked before, and I repeat, that there is a great deal of drinking going on among the sepoys of our regiments; and the abominable trash they take is enough to kill them by dozens. The toddy and arrack vended to them in the villages through which they pass on a march are both rank poison: I would therefore invariably have a guard in the villages, and hold the head authorities of those places responsible that no liquor of any description be sold to the men.

Indeed, I would allow no communication whatever between the troops and the villages; every article of food, &c. is brought into camp, and soldiery have no business to be strolling and prowling about beyond the prescribed limits. Those who break through the order should be severely dealt with, and I think it would not take long in putting a stop to drinking on a line of march, at least drinking the stuff that is to be had in the villages.

European troops are allowed a supply of good substantial spirits for daily consumption. I really do not see why government should withhold such indulgence from the native soldiery. Let a supply of arrack from government stores accompany a native regiment, let a canteen be opened, and let those who require spirits come and buy, and drink. It is better they should do this than poison themselves, and then die like rotten sheep. Government would not be losers by such an arrangement, and such quantities as are not used could easily be returned into stores on arrival of the regiment at the next station.

We had altogether a very pleasant journey to Poonamullee, where we arrived in due time. The route we travelled afforded us plenty of sport. We had snipe and wild-fowl in abundance, with partridge and hare as much as we wished. Our table was supplied entirely from the produce of our guns; in fact, we had so much at times, that our servants and followers as also many of our men shared of the bag. But game in the country of the Carnatic is particularly insipid, dry eating, and rather tough to boot; for nothing can be kept to get tender as in England; what is killed must be consumed at once, otherwise it very soon becomes unfit to be eaten at all.

The best way to use game in some parts of India, is, I think, to put it into *pickle*; snipe, partridge,

teal and duck, opened down the breast and put into salt for a few days, and after that dried in the sun, and then hung in the cook-room over the smoke of the wood-fire, make capital eating, and keep a considerable time; they are an excellent addition to the breakfast-table, particularly on a march, when good fresh provisions are not always procurable.

Hare is always best when potted. A roast hare is not eatable, from its being so very dry and tasteless; not even the accompaniment of jelly or tamarind sauce will make it palatable, nor is it nice in a stew; but potted hare, well concocted, is, I think, delicious, and can be used at any time for breakfast, tiffen or supper. It will, moreover, keep. I have seen hare potted in India ate in England, and it was just as good as when first done!

The reader may feel disposed to disbelieve me, but I can assure him that I have ate an excellent curry made from a young monkey! The meat was most tender, and exceedingly savoury. In some parts of Ceylon, the natives use the flesh of the monkey very often, particularly in broths and curries for sick people. I have also ate a pie made of parrots and guanas, and an excellent dish it was, too.

But let us take a look at Poonamullee. To the Madras officer the place must be familiar, connected as it is with reminiscences of many a jovial trip to

the dépôt mess ; European soldiers lying drunk in the fort-ditch, and a multiplicity of strange looking ponies, better known by the high sounding title of "Poonamullee Arabs." Everybody knows what description of animals they are. Verily are they the strangest compound of skin and bone I would wish to see, and the most vicious brutes that ever went under the designation of four-footed animals.

And yet the "Poonamullee Arab" is very useful sometimes, particularly on a line of march, they answer capitally to carry one's bullock-trunks when other cattle are not procurable.

## CHAPTER VIII.

Poonamullee as a Depôt—Choosing a Bungalow—Ingenious Devices for smuggling Spirits into Barracks—White Ants—The Mischief they effect—How to guard against them—Visit to the Presidency—Studying the Language—Mooches great Humbugs—Advice to Beginners regarding these Men—How they ought to be treated—Remarks on the best Means of acquiring the Language.

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IF the walls of the old fort at Poonamullee were knocked down, and the whole levelled and exposed, the place would be tolerable; but at present it is anything but what a dépôt for European soldiers should be. In the first place, the hospital and part of the barracks are situated within the fort, the ramparts running close to those buildings, so as to completely keep out any healthy circulation of air. The ditch is partly dry and partly wet. The dry is full of all the dirt and filth from the interior, deposited by sweepers; the wet is nothing but putrid stagnant water, in some parts black mud.

This cannot be a healthy locality for old or young soldiers; the former waiting to be sent home by the first ships, at times detained there for months;

and the latter coming fresh from England, and stationed there preparatory to marching up country. The buildings for the use of the troops inside the fort are good substantial ones, and there could not possibly be any objections, if those abominable rotten tumble-down ramparts were out of the way.

Outside, again, there are extensive ranges of barracks, in various directions, sufficient for the accommodation of two or three regiments, perhaps more; but they have their drawback also, inasmuch as that they happen to be just diametrically opposite to those situated in the fort; they have no shelter or screen at all; they are too much exposed; there is nothing to keep off the hot sun, or the force of the burning, parching land winds; not even a tree near them!

The officers' quarters are wretched, little bits of pigeon-holes, not so large as those at Arnee, and so hot, that anybody residing in them *ought* to be grilled to death, or undergo suffocation. How can troops be expected to continue comfortable, or healthy, if they are cooped up in such miserable receptacles? Impossible! The every-day work of death gives the lie to it at once, and there is not a doubt but that a greater part of the sickness among European soldiery is to be attributed to their being *badly* housed. Poonamullee would be a desirable place, if the accommodations for the troops were better.

There is a range of buildings called "the French Barracks," so designated from the circumstance of the French prisoners, taken during the last war, having been located there. They are the best in the place. The pretty little church is about a quarter of a mile from the barracks. It is a tolerably-built edifice, and capable of containing about a hundred people.

Poonamullee is much frequented by old pensioned European soldiers; there are many of them residing within the limits of the dépôt, in cottages neatly laid out, with small gardens in front of them. The scenes which sometimes occur among them of drunkenness and debauchery, are disgraceful in the extreme, and show but a bad example to the young and raw soldiery, who crowd the barracks from time to time. It is really a pity that these veterans are allowed to reside at Poonamullee. There is an establishment at a place called Trippasore, within a short distance, purposely adapted for European out-pensioners, where all might be stationed together, and be out of the way of the regular troops, as they ought to be; non-effectives should never be located with the effectives, particularly with recruits. The old men only teach the young lads bad habits; they put them up to all kinds of mischief, and do them otherwise much harm.

Taking Poonamullee altogether, I think it the

very counterpart of Arnee. As stations, they are both execrable. I cannot conceive how Government could possibly have selected two so ill-adapted for the purposes for which they are used. The burying-ground of each is full of graves, plainly testifying that neither can be healthy.

Poonamullee is also a station for civilians. It was, I think, the head-quarters of the collector and magistrate of South Arcot, and the principal civil officer had his cutcherry (or court house), in some of the old barracks, which were well fitted up and rendered very comfortable.

My friend C—— B—— and I took a bungalow between us, determining to chum together during our stay. The building was tolerably comfortable and roomy, but they were miserable quarters compared to those we had left behind us at Vellore. However, bachelors very soon contrive to shake themselves into any place; we were not long in making our domain clean (a primary consideration with me wherever I go), and as neat as circumstances would admit. We brought all our kits down with us, so that we wanted nothing. Our *ménage* was in excellent order, and we did the thing in style, occasionally giving ladies' parties.

Our men were located in and about the native village, and we had for our barracks or place of arms a dirty old building, evidently very much out of repair, and situated in a separate part of the

cantonment. The detachment was very hard worked during our stay at Poouamullee. There was nothing but duty, duty, duty, from one end of the week to the other; and that duty consisted in furnishing guards inside the fort, over some ragga-muffin native marauders, and at the gates to prevent the soldiery from smuggling spirits into the barracks; not being allowed to bring it in by fair means, they try to do so by foul, and resort to a variety of expedients, one of which was to hoist it over the ramparts; the soldier letting down a string and his comrade walking into the ditch and fastening a bottle thereto, which was hoisted up on a given signal.

Another method was concealing liquor in certain places under ground, and the soldiery frequenting the spots and drinking it unobserved. A third way was that of carrying spirits in bladders about the person, in a style perfectly ridiculous, women as well as men vying with each other in what manner they can best arrange them so as to escape detection.

We were invited to become honorary members of the dépôt mess, but as there was no necessity for it, and as we preferred keeping house ourselves, we declined, and only went there occasionally. The mess at that time was a very bad one, and very expensive. The wines were not fit to drink, and the meals worse. There was nobody to superintend

the establishment, the consequences were that the rascally butler had it all his own way, and preciously did he cheat the poor ignorant griffins of Queen's officers, who were obliged to frequent it. Such rascality I never before witnessed. It beat even the knavery of the cadets' quarters !

Every one has heard or read of those destructive insects called white ants, so peculiar to the east. They are looked upon by us as the greatest thieves and enemies we can possibly have, and so mischievous are they, that I am really afraid to say what they will not destroy. I remember a ludicrous anecdote I once heard, showing what the natives themselves think of their propensities. One of the guns on the ramparts of Fort St. George was reported unserviceable in consequence of its being honeycombed ; the story goes that the man bringing the report was a gun-lascar, and the ordnance people asked him what was the matter with the gun ? The man replied with great simplicity—

“Kee-hai-kee, sahib ; leken deemük khā gyā !”  
“Why, sir, I don't exactly know, but the white ants must have been eating it !”

I have myself witnessed some very extraordinary proofs of the mischief these creatures have done. Their ravages will appear incredible to the inexperienced, who may never have come in contact with them. When marching down from the

Western coast in 1835, one of the men of my company had his firelock completely destroyed by the white ants ! I recollect he was late for mustering, previously to marching off : the reason he gave was, that he could not make out what had come to his musket, which he had placed by his side during the night. He was found seated inside his tent trying to discover how it had become in that state, and, upon examination, we found that the insects had literally eaten away the stock ; the lock fell out, and the butt-end was rendered quite unserviceable ! All this was done in one night !

But, whilst at Poonamullee, my poor chum suffered more from white ants than any person I have ever met with. He kept all his uniforms, coats, jackets, pantaloons, epauletttes, sashes and belts, &c. in a very nice camphor-wood trunk (which, by the way, are supposed to be *anti-white ant*), safe, as he imagined, from all harm. This box he had raised from the floor, placing it upon four bricks. One day my friend went to the box to take his clothes out ; he opened it, and, to his great horror and astonishment, discovered that scarcely any of his things were left ! The greater part of his full-dress and other articles of uniform had been demolished by these dreadful visitors ; the buttons and lace were found in the bottom of the box ! Had he come somewhat later, there would have been nothing left to tell the tale ! Thus was my chum regularly robbed,

and that too without the slightest hopes of ever recovering his lost property, all which he was obliged to replace, with little or no money to pay for them.

White ants will attack anything in the shape of cloth, or linen ; leather, (russia leather excepted,) boots, shoes, saddlery and harness ; eatables, furniture, in fact, anything ! They have been often known to tap a cask, or to open bottles of wine, or beer, by eating the corks ! There are of course exceptions ; for instance, they will not touch anything with *pætrolium* (or earth-oil) rubbed on it : cloth, or linen, which has indigo on it they never come near, and they shun sulphur.

White ants are the most industrious creatures in the world. I have often watched them with a magnifying glass. 'Tis a most amusing sight. They go to work with admirable ingenuity, carrying their earth and water in their bodies, and plastering as it were their winding passages for several yards with the greatest regularity, and in an incredibly short space of time ; throwing out branching passages in different directions, by way of feelers. They will pierce through the cement or *chunam* on the floors, walls, or ceilings ; and attack whatever is nearest to them. If they find nothing close at hand, they throw out their scouts to scour the country and report prey, and then do they set to work and sap and mine regularly up to the object of their destruction ; and, when the

business does commence in real earnest, it is not long in being accomplished.

Pictures on the walls of a room are destroyed in a most effective manner. The ants will work through a wall close up to a picture and take it in its rear, and no one knows what is going on until a large hole is discovered, and some valuable production of the pencil completely ruined. They will probably eat a portrait, taking off the whole face, or an eye, or the nose, as neatly as if cut out with a knife.

I remember a friend of mine who had two pictures, of his father and mother; they were placed close to each other. He came into his room one morning, and to his great disgust and sorrow discovered that the faces of both portraits had been entirely eaten away by the abominable wretches in the course of the night!

If white ants once get themselves into a tent, farewell to it for ever! They do their work with such rapidity, that people are really surprised when they find some article, which they had seen a few hours before, partly or wholly demolished. I once had a portfolio full of sketches and drawings eaten up and ruined by them. On one occasion, I happened to put out a lot of books and papers on mats to air in the sun; when I went to bring them in, I found that my little demons had been at them, and that several very valuable works were quite spoiled.

White ants spare nothing, and, singular enough, they are so acute and knowing, that all the time they are playing the deuce with a poor man's kit, they have their sentries thrown out in all directions, and on the least noise of approach they disappear in an instant, leaving only their vacant passages to mark their visit. If it should so happen that there be anything kept in any part of a room which they are unable to get at from below, they will work their way up a wall and across the roof, or ceiling, to the exact spot under which the desired booty is located ; then by slow process they work a passage downwards from the ceiling until it reaches to within a certain distance of the object ; they then drop themselves down on it, and do their work ; after which they bore a hole in the floor to enable them to beat a retreat when they are satisfied.

It is next to an impossibility to prevent these insects from paying you a visit, or to destroy them when they come. If you block up their aperture on the floor, wall or ceiling, they start away in an opposite direction, and show themselves elsewhere. I have known so many as six or seven entrances made by them in one room.

The best way to keep them from attacking clothes, books or papers, or indeed anything, is to get *petrolium* (it is procurable almost every where in India), or tar, should the former not be within reach ; and rub the legs of chairs and tables

or the bottoms of boxes and trunks, and the backs of pictures, &c. &c. as well as to keep a bright look out against their incursions, having the carpets and mats frequently taken up, the floors well swept and sprinkled with wood ashes ; all the incipient passages destroyed, and a little *pætrolium* poured into every opening. Your whole property must undergo constant watchfulness and examination, and there is a probability of your keeping them off ; but if not, one night will be the ruin of you.

It is very easy to detect the white ant at work ; they make a sort of sharp and creaking noise as they move their *mandibles* ; and I have frequently stopped them in consequence of listening and hearing that noise in the night. In damp rainy weather, they are very plentiful and troublesome. It behoves people during such seasons to have their servants ever on the alert ; it is astonishing the mischief they will do ! All the stopping of holes, pouring down oil, or hot water, blowing them up with gunpowder, or suffocating them with smoke, are of no avail. Drive them away from one place, they are sure to appear somewhere else ; so that the only remedy against the evil is to be careful and prevent their fixing upon anything.

In camp, white ants are very troublesome ; they are sure to attack every article placed on the ground, and the best preventive is an indigo-dyed carpet, bricks under your boxes, and a sharp look

out, else the tent itself will suffer for want of something better ; and, if that takes place, you are, as the vulgar saying is—"done for!"

In the month of May of the same year, a detachment from Palaverani was sent to relieve us. We therefore prepared to march back to Vellore, and delighted were we at the prospect of returning to head-quarters. But, as I was desirous to remain, and if possible pass an examination in Hindustanee, I applied for leave, which to my great satisfaction was granted me.

I remained in my old quarters at Poonamullee, hard at work with a moonshee, but I shortly after removed down to Madras, to the house of a worthy friend, since dead, who was kind enough to give up the use of the bungalow in his compound entirely to me. And here I began in real earnest. I had two moonshees in my pay, and worked hard from ten in the morning until four in the afternoon. One moonshee kept me translating from Hindustanee into English, and the other *vice versa*. This I continued until the middle of July, intending to go up for an examination at the College early the ensuing month.

And now, a word or two about these moonshees, or rather teachers. I look upon them generally as the veriest humbugs that can be met with among the natives. Habit and a wish to please make them adopt a line of conduct towards their em-

ployers quite at variance with honesty and sincerity. They assume a style of language and manners servile in the extreme. Every thing they say has something in it of compliment to the person addressed ; some silvery, flowery speech calculated to disgust far more than please ; and their fawning, cringing ways of saluting, acquiescing, and smiling, are all very mean and deceitful.

These men are never content, but when flattering their students by telling him that he is very clever, his pronunciation excellent, and his talking equal to that of a native ; his handwriting beautifully legible, and his idiom first rate ! In fact, they will not scruple to tell a man to his face, with many an artful assurance, that he is a perfect linguist, whereas, if the truth were spoken, the poor student knows nothing about the matter !

Let a moonshee be ever so respectable, never believe anything he says. The generality of them (and with exceptions very few) tell falsehoods with the greatest *nonchalance* possible ; and are apt to abuse you behind your back, while they are flattering you to your face. I say that I assert this from experience, because I remember my two teachers used to go on with me exactly in the manner that I have described. The rascals told me that I was very clever indeed ! Quite master of the language, and that I should pass a brilliant examination ! That, in fact, they had neither of

them had such a "*shagird, hooshiar-wu-chālūk*," (such an intelligent or apt scholar,) to teach before!

I had both these moonshees sent me from the College. Men who were in those days in the pay of Government, purposely maintained to attend upon and instruct young officers and civilians during their course of study. They came to me with strong recommendations of character; their fitness to instruct was unquestionable; but their aptitude in giving what is vulgarly termed "*blarney*," was probably not known at the College, though the students are the only persons who have an opportunity of ascertaining that qualification.

These men used to do nothing but praise me up to the skies, and tell me to go up and apply for an examination committee, declaring that I should undoubtedly succeed with flying colours! "*Oas men kūchh shūkh wū shooba nahin hai sahib!*" (there is not the slightest doubt of it, sir!) they would say.

Thinking them therefore sincere (and in doing so I acknowledge myself a great griffin), and that they were the best judges in such matters, I did apply for an examination, and on the day appointed underwent the ordeal; and, had it not been for the rascality of the moonshee who was present on the occasion, (one of the very men whom I had been paying, and who had told me that there was not a doubt of my success,)—had it not been for his

rascality, the chances were that I should have passed.

As it was, however, the fellow puzzled me with Persian and Sanskrit words in the "*conversation*," and conglomerated my ideas so much with his difficult sentences, that after all it was a failure, inasmuch as that the committee reported me not fit for an interpreter's duties, but stated that I had made creditable progress, and recommended me to study a little longer, &c. &c.

Now, this self-same moonshee, be it known, solemnly promised me that he would make use of very easy language in conversing with me, and I told him that if I succeeded, I should divide the reward, viz., 180 rupees (a paltry reward indeed!) between the two teachers by way of remuneration. Instead of making my ordeal easy as he had promised, he did quite the contrary. Had I put fifty rupees into the hands of the moonshee just previously to my going up before the committee, in the shape of a "*rishwüt*" (bribe), there is not a doubt but that he would have cleared the way for me.

Beginners in studying the languages in India, particularly those who have not had much experience with the natives, have some difficulties to overcome; but these are rendered comparatively easy by a little care and forethought. In the first place, the principal difficulty to get over is the securing the services of an intelligent and respect-

able teacher. The best and most efficient moonshees are those attached to regiments of the line. Interpreters of corps are the best calculated to judge as to the capabilities, characters and respectability of these men, and it is to one of these officers that I would recommend young beginners to apply for assistance and advice, on this important subject.

A moonshee should know what course to adopt in the instruction of his pupil; what books he should read as a commencement, and how he should act as regards grammar. Much tact is, I think, requisite in these arrangements. I have seen young men plodding away at *Shakespeare's Grammar*, and his *Selections*, stuffing their brains with all the most intricate and puzzling grammatical technicalities and phrases, with which those two books abound; making translations of fables and stories, with wrong meanings to the originals, working away at nouns, pronouns, verbs and participles, and labouring at things which only to serve to confound and disgust, without instructing.

A proper moonshee will know, that the adopting a course like the above is of no use whatever, and will set his pupil on the right track of discovering that which he so ardently desires, viz. a proper idea of the *idiom* of the language, without a knowledge of which, all the fagging in the world will be of no avail. No European can, in my opinion,

teach an oriental language, whatever his own capabilities may be.

The next difficulty to be overcome is to know the way in which these sable-browed teachers are to be dealt with, when once admitted into the service of a student. There is an old saying about too much familiarity breeding contempt. In nothing is this saying more verified than in the intercourse of Europeans with natives generally, and in nothing more so than in the daily dealings of the pupil with his teacher.

These men are the most insinuating rascals under the Indian sun ! Their very address gives rise to a degree of familiarity on the part of the student, who imperceptibly finds himself on terms of intimacy with his employer, who allows him to do just as he likes ; he comes to give lessons, or he does not come at all ; he talks and laughs, instead of teaching, and wastes time which ought to be spent in the occupation for which he is paid ; the student, careless about progress, and too glad, probably, to chat and amuse himself, instead of learning, encourages the teacher, and there the two sit for hours together in perfect idleness.

The progress which a man makes depends greatly on himself ; there is a regular rule laid down for gaining a knowledge of, and mastering the eastern languages. The alphabet being acquired, the putting together of letters, so as to form words of one,

or two, or three syllables, should then follow; after that, the finding out their meanings, and then learning them by heart; again, those words should be thrown into easy sentences, and rendered into English; the same sentences should be committed to memory, and re-translated into the original.

Again, the reading of easy sentences, in the rough character, in order to acquire a knowledge and practice of the hand-writing (which is of the utmost importance), and the conversing in familiar language with the moonshee, putting down all words looked out in the dictionary; all these preliminaries facilitate the labours of the beginner. After this, the grammar may be brought into action, so as to give the student a helping hand in his translations from the English, and assist him materially in the idiom. He may then commence the "Stories of the Parrot;" after which, he must read the *Bāgh-wū-bāhār*, or *Chūr-Dūr-wesh* (the Adventures of the four Durweshes), and from that to the *Ikh wāu ool-sūffā*, and then the *Gool-i-būkāwūllee*, and *Goolistun*.

These books must be read over two or three times, so that the pupil may be able to translate any portion of one of them, without the aid of a dictionary. This I look upon as the easiest part of the whole business. The difficult one is the rendering from English into Hindustanee, the pupil

being careful to keep strictly to the meaning of the original, consistent with the idiom, and to bear in mind that, unless that is particularly attended to, his translation is nothing.

The next items are the spelling and hand-writing; both which require the greatest care, and I think the best way to become perfect in them is by every day copying some correct manuscript book, which will be excellent practice. But it will be necessary to select proper English books to make translations from, and I consider that the student should be well directed as to the substance of what he will have to do. All works of military detail, dispatches, official letters on various subjects connected with the army, reports of actions fought, of victories lost or won, of towns and villages sacked and burnt, of men killed and wounded, of the nature of the country, the capabilities of supplies for troops, of defence, of being traversed; all such matters it will be necessary to become acquainted with, for the technicalities and phrases are innumerable, and the more the student gets into the pith of the language, the more requisite will it be for him to devote his whole soul to the pursuit. If he is able to translate well from our own language, he may safely be considered as proficient in the Hindustanee, for that is the *most* difficult: as I said before, all others are of minor importance.

The next thing to be attended to is the translating *vivâ voce* from English ; this tests the pupil's command of words and knowledge of idiom ; he should practise paragraphs of general or standing orders, extracts from proceedings of courts-martial, crimes, finding and sentences, remarks by the confirming officer, and such like.

Then comes the being able to read and translate off-hand letters, or *urzees* (petitions), written by the natives themselves, soldiery, or others connected with the service ; beginning, in the first place, with short neatly-written easy notes, and from them going on to more and more difficult productions. The greater number he reads of them, the better practice. Some, indeed the generality of these letters and *urzees*, are written by ignorant, ill-educated men ; they are, consequently, replete with blunders, bad spelling, and omissions, so that they are truly puzzling to the beginner ; but they become comparatively easy in the end, and it is solely by frequently reading them, that anybody is able to decipher their contents, or comprehend their meaning.

Many of these productions are most amusing, and serve to give the young officer a good insight into the character of our native soldiery. Those addressed to officers are full of all kinds of compliments, ending by begging promotion, or leave,

or something of that description, for themselves, or relatives ; while those written to each other generally commence in a very affectionate style, and end either by asking for a loan of money, or for a supply of clothes.

The course which I have taken upon myself to describe, is the one generally adopted by those who qualify themselves for the interpretership, and nothing but an interpreter's examination will entitle a man to a staff appointment. I think that by dint of steady hard work, taking lessons at set hours each day, uninterrupted by visitors, strolling about and chatting with idle folks, a man may safely calculate upon being able to pass in about six months from the commencement ; though probably some may get over it in less time, while others, again, would require double.

Every body passes now-a-days, and, indeed, no man can get on in the service unless he does so ; at least, so says the chairman of the Court of Directors, and the regulations of the service. The rules are strict, and none but those who are proficient in one or more languages can possibly get on to the staff of the army. Not all the interest in the world (it is so said) can break through these rules, though I cannot help remarking, with all due deference, that the greater number of the officers at present on the staff, and holding some of the

*highest, most influential, and most important situations in almost every department, have not passed any examination, and know little or nothing of the languages ; and yet we are told, before we quit home, that unless we do study and master the languages, we cannot get a staff situation.*

## CHAPTER IX.

Return to Vellore—Travelling by Dawk—Relays of Bearers—Beauty of the Country on the way to Cuddalore—Choultries—Hill Forts of Gingee—Robbers—Thugs—Description of Cuddalore—Employment of Convicts—Hospitals—Pensioners' Lines in the Old Town—Wretched Condition of the Pensioners—Mode of Fishing—Skittles—What Cuddalore once was, and what it is now—Ruins of Fort St. David—New Town—Suggestions respecting Troop-Stations, and Health of Troops—Boating on the Back-water—Fishing by Torch-light.

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I was glad to be on my return to regimental head-quarters. I detested the Presidency, and had hoped, when I last quitted it, never to go near the place again; but it appeared that I was doomed to do so, for no sooner was I away from it than I either found myself there, or on my way.

The manner in which I travelled on the occasion of my going back to Vellore was by posting, or "*running dawk*," as it is termed; which means, travelling by relays of bearers, stationed at certain stages, where they change. When any one wishes

to travel in this way, an application is made to the Post-office authorities for the relays of bearers being posted along the route he intends going; but, before this arrangement can be made, the traveller is obliged to pay a deposit of a certain sum, according to the distance, and to state whether he is likely to be detained on the road. The deposit is demanded purposely to avoid these detentions, the amount being forfeited, in addition to the regulated hire, should any take place.

The requisite sum being paid down, a day is fixed upon by the "Jack-in-office" for the traveller's starting, a certain time being absolutely required for the posting of the bearers, which done, the bearers for the first stage are sent to his residence, and these men prepare the palankeen in their own manner, by lashing and binding, and a variety of other preliminaries, too numerous for me to detail.

A set of bearers consists of twelve men, including the "*pūdda-bhuee*," or head-bearer; besides these, there is a fellow for carrying the "*massaul*," or torch, as also another for the "*cavary baskets*," or "*pettarahs*," which are a couple of baskets, or light tin boxes, generally painted green, slung on a bamboo, containing eating and drinking requisites for the journey. The whole set have a man of their own to convey their food and cooking utensils.

These poor fellows run for upwards of thirty

miles, with scarcely any rest, at the rate of four miles an hour, taking little or no sustenance all the time ! When arrived at the end of their stage, they put down their load, and walk off, though some of them are apt to be troublesome, by begging a present, and it is generally customary to give them a rupee or so.

The new set are not long in making their appearance. They lift up the palkee, and trudge off without saying a word to the traveller ; but they can never make a start without a great noise and wrangling among themselves, which it is almost useless to attempt to check ; and in this manner they proceed, running along till they come to the end of their stage, quitting the palankeen like their predecessors.

Whilst I was at the Presidency during the months of May, June, and July, 1836, a detachment of my regiment had been ordered off to Cuddalore, a station situated about one hundred and fifteen miles from Vellore ; so that, when I returned, I found the number of our small circle considerably diminished. I say considerably diminished, because, when the officers are so few as they were in those days in a Regiment of Native Infantry, the absence even of one or two was looked upon as a great gap in the sum total of those we were in the habit of meeting daily at mess. As for one of the bachelors marrying, such an event was invariably considered

as a calamity, under any circumstances ; and anybody going away from the corps was thought, by those remaining behind, as leaving a blank space, to be regarded with feelings of regret, until filled up by the return of the absentee, or by the arrival of some new comer.

Amongst those who I found had accompanied the detachment, was my old chum ; the regret, therefore, on my part, was great. However, we were not long separated ; for, from some cause or other, two of the subalterns of the detachment were ordered to return to regimental head-quarters, and I was directed to proceed, without delay, to join that out-post, instead. I therefore packed up my traps again, borrowed a palankeen, and started two days after receiving orders to march.

Marching in India is at all times attended with much expense, but coming so soon upon me as it did after my recent travellings, it told upon my pockets ; but a man who follows the profession of a soldier, should be ready to move at a moment's warning ; and, when the order comes, regrets, expenses, and their consequences, are of no avail : go he must, and the sooner he starts, the better for him, and the sooner will he arrive at the end of his journey.

Unless, by-the-bye, he should happen to be met on the road by that highwayman, "Mr. Corporal

Forbes,"\* who not only *demands* your "money or your life," but rifles your pockets of the one, and frequently takes possession of the other. Marching, now-a-days, is not considered one of the most pleasant undertakings in this nether world. What a boon will the railway-travelling be when it is established in India; but I fear we shall not enjoy the benefits of it while we are in the service.

I travelled this time by regular stages, and with only one set of bearers, halting at every ten or fifteen miles, at convenient places, where I would stop for the day, amusing myself either with shooting, or taking sketches of various ruins, with which the country abounded; the scenery, too, gave ample food for the pencil; I do not think I ever saw such picturesque views as presented themselves in every direction. I had capital sport, bagging partridge, hare, snipe, and teal in abundance. What a blessing it is that there are no game laws in India!

I met with few bungalows on the road for the accommodation of travellers; I was obliged, therefore, to put up in choultries, or under topes of trees, erected or planted by wealthy natives for the express purpose, for the use of their countrymen when travelling; the former are sometimes very comfortable places, with a tank full of good water in front of them, though it not unfrequently happens that the buildings are in so filthy a state that they

\* Alias *Cholera Morbus*.

are not fit to be occupied, excepting they undergo a thorough cleansing and purification, which must be done by one's own servants.

Under these circumstances, it is always better to pitch tents, as it is dangerous to occupy such dirty places, for more reasons than one. As regards the tanks, they are often found either empty, or the water in them is bad; but the topes of trees are sometimes composed of mangoes, and sometimes of tamarinds, as well as a variety of others, which throw forth their branches so thickly, that the sky above is barely visible. These afford excellent shelter from the heat of the sun, and many is the time that I have pitched my tent under the covering of some huge "*peepul*," whose wide stretching branches have waved over me, fanning the air into delicious coolness, and lulling me to sleep by the gentle murmuring of its sighs among the leaves.

Natives erect these choultries, dig the tanks, and plant the topes, at great expense, from charitable and religious motives. Some of these buildings are very extensive and well constructed, while others are mean and insignificant; but the will that prompts them to make the outlay and to raise the structures, amply compensates for their meanness, or want of accommodation; and when the benefits derivable by travellers are taken into consideration, the reader will at once say that their existence exhibits an excellent trait in the native character,

and reflects great credit on their benevolent and charitable dispositions.

Building in India is cheap, and it is a pity that there are not bungalows for the use of travellers at the different stages along the roads through which they have to pass in going from one station to another. The convenience would be great, and more than compensate for the expense incurred in erection; and no conception can be formed of the discomforts to which people are put, when, on arriving at a stage with their families, they find there is no accommodation for them; and it is not always that families do travel with establishments of camp-equipage in their trains. But this inconvenience is not felt generally, for bungalows are much more frequent along a route, now-a-days, to what they were ten or twelve years ago, when the meeting with one was looked upon as a fortunate circumstance.

On my road, I passed by the famous Hill Forts of Gingee, well known, in former years, as having been held by the French on several occasions, when they improved and added to the fortifications, which to this day show evidence of durability and strength. I will not trouble the reader with a description of this place, though there are many anecdotes and circumstances of interest connected with it. The woods and jungles abound with game of all sorts, and I dare say there are many of my

friends who have visited the rugged battlements, or clambered the dangerous rocks, in quest of the antelope, or the jungle-goat. Some parts of the hills are really difficult of access, and it requires practice, as well as care, to venture up. Doing so without experienced guides would be foolish, for people have been known to lose their lives by venturing alone.

These forts were for a long time the retreats of "*dacoites*," or gangs of robbers, who used to infest the roads and woods in that neighbourhood; and there is many a story told of their doings upon the passengers who travelled that way. They were a regular set of Robin Hood and his bold yeomen; armed with bows and arrows, matchlocks and pistols, swords and daggers, they were the terror of the whole country; and many a dreadful murder and other acts of cruelty have they been known to perpetrate on helpless travellers.

Numberless complaints were made against them through the civil authorities of their daring deeds; of houses sacked and burned, of money stolen, of women carried away, without being ever seen again, and so forth. At last, armed parties of the military were sent against the villains, and many caught in their own fastnesses; several were hanged, and their bodies suspended in chains on gibbets, on the road-side, as a warning to their fellows; while others were transported for life, until the whole gang of them were completely destroyed, and many

very important facts brought to light in the course of the examination of the culprits.

To this day, however, I believe that the Hills of Gingee afford shelter to the thief, the murderer, and the highwayman ; for I was told by a native of that part of the country that there were various subterranean passages and caverns unknown save to those who frequented them, and that he had heard it from the good authority of a man who had once been taken into one of them by a gang of robbers, from whom he had contrived to make his escape ; but be this as it may, I should conceive that such should be examined and destroyed, if they do exist.

Numbers of the thieves in that part of the country are "*thugs*," and I should not be at all surprised if the many dreadful murders which they have been known to commit in accordance with their creed, have taken place in the dark and dreary caverns of the fort, and that if search were made many a hidden secret would be revealed, and whitened skeletons of hapless victims discovered.

I reached Cuddalore after a very pleasant though lonely journey of ten days, and took up my quarters with my old chum, who was glad again to have me with him, as he said on my arrival.

I think Cuddalore a very pleasant station. It is situated close to the sea, with a back-water or river between it and the town, which is divided into two

compartments, the old and the new town. The former is composed of closely-built houses laid out in lanes and streets. The houses are in the old style, reminding me of those at Cochin ; some of them are large and commodious, and built of substantial materials. These latter are generally facing the sea on the edge of the back-water, while the smaller and meaner buildings are more in the interior of the town.

And here must have resided in bygone years many of those individuals whose names we read of in the early history of our Indian empire, many of them rendered illustrious for their deeds, and for the service they rendered their country in aiding her to hold fast the rich prize which she had gained, and which she could not have done but for their fidelity, their wisdom, and their valour.

The largest building in Old Town is the jail. It is very extensive, and holds a great number of convicts, who are employed under the civil authorities on the roads or in the manufacture of a variety of articles, superintended by Europeans. Table-cloths, towels, and napkins, and also cloths of different textures are made here, and considered excellent materials, very durable and exceedingly cheap. I think these are the best of the kind I have seen in this part of India. The furniture, however, is inferior ; it might be better. Natives

of India are not good carpenters, at least I do not consider them so ; they have not the neatness and taste of John Chinaman.

The hospital (I mean the general one) is also situated in the Old Town. This is a very bad arrangement ; for being surrounded by houses closely built, and with one whole face of it on the river, I cannot think it healthy, nor the air about it so pure as it ought to be. It appears to me a strange thing, that, at whatsoever station I have been, the public hospitals, I have remarked, are invariably located in some objectionable situation. Let us call to mind now the different garrisons and cantonments we have been in, and we shall find that nine out of ten are either inside an old fort, or on the margin of some dirty piece of water, or at all events, any where but where they should be.

Let me enumerate the hospitals that I have seen. Behold the Grand General Hospital at Madras. It is in the Black Town, the most filthy, unwholesome, unhealthy place in the whole world I may say. One flank of the entire buildings is skirted by a stagnant canal or ditch, full of black, muddy, filthy, water, from whence arise effluvia sufficient to poison the air, which must penetrate into the wards where the patients are berthed ; this surely cannot be healthy. The remaining portion is surrounded by native huts which speak loudly for

themselves : can this be considered a proper locality, particularly for European soldiery, when sick ?

The Hospital for the Native Regiment at Vepery is situated in the middle of the men's lines, with a dirty puddle of water close to it, into which is thrown all the rubbish, and the passer by may often see dead dogs, &c. &c. either floating on the surface, or lying on the edge. The General Hospital at Vellore is inside that hot oven of a fort, close under the ramparts, and surrounded by a ditch full of green water swarming with alligators, and throwing out a stench as if it were filled with dead bodies in a state of putrefaction. This receptacle for the sick admits not only out-patients and those connected with the different departments of the garrison, but also those who may be taken ill in the corps composing the force within. The regimental lines are some two miles from the fort, so that any poor fellow taken suddenly ill, with cholera for instance, has to be carried all that distance, and if in the night has to wait until the gates are opened, ere his case can be taken in hand : this is a bad arrangement, truly.

The hospital at Poonamullee is also inside the fort, the same at Arnee, and if I am not mistaken the one at Bangalore is likewise so situated ; in fact, I think I am not far wrong, when I say that the greater number of these buildings, instead of being

on high salubrious ground, free from anything calculated to prevent a pure circulation of air, untainted by miasma or any other objectionables, are in the worst possible positions. How very odd, that our clever doctors, our wise-headed medical boards, should not have such things reformed !

But to proceed. The church (apparently an old one) is also in the Old Town.\* In this place of worship, service is performed twice a day every Sunday, by a clergyman belonging to the station, and to which the European pensioners are regularly marched. The native part of the town is a little further to the southward, on the outskirts and along the inner bank of the river; the huts are closely built, and the population considerable.

There being no regular place allotted for the hutting of our men, they were obliged to locate themselves wherever they could find lodgings, for the which, by the way, they had to pay very high rent; and this was hard upon the poor fellows, considering they receive no allowance to make up for such contingencies, their own houses at regimental head-quarters falling to ruins in the meantime.

The pensioners' lines in the Old Town are extensive, and present a strange medley of neatness and cleanliness, together with filth and dirt commingled,

\* It belongs, I believe, to the missionaries.

the former showing the habitation of the well-conducted, sober and industrious ; while the latter that of the drunkard and the idler, who spent his all in spirits, without the wherewithal to render himself and his family in any way comfortable, or happy. The lines are laid out in streets ; the houses or cottages are however irregular, some of them are large compared to others, which have more the appearance of pigsties than fit places for the veteran British soldier.

These poor old fellows, of whom there are many, live in the most abject, squalid state. They and their numerous families eke out a miserable existence with no employment to serve as pastime, no thoughts save those of the arrack-bottle, the contents of which they are constantly imbibing. There are, as may be supposed, many exceptions to these remarks ; but taking this dépôt as a whole, we cannot but see in it just cause for animadversion, and consequently much room for improvement.

A great deal might, I think, be done to better the condition of these self-exiled men and their numerous families. The charitable exertions of the European portion of the society at Cuddalore might tend much towards doing something to make them live more like our own countrymen and Christians than they now do ; but alas ! no such improvements are made, no such efforts even thought of !

There is a veteran officer in charge of these

pensioners, a very worthy man, and for whom I have the greatest regard and respect; but it is not in his power to do what ought to be done; his means are small and his hands tied; but surely the many officers and civilians who reside at and frequent the place from time to time, they might cast an eye of pity and commiseration upon these worn-out veterans, and contribute in some measure, if not with their purse, at all events with their advice, towards ameliorating their sufferings and adding to their respectability.

The pensioners consist of men of her Majesty's as well as of the Company's troops, who have attached themselves by marriage or otherwise to Eurasians and native women; few if any with European wives remain in the country longer than they are obliged, preferring rather to return home than live in the truly miserable manner which many of their countrymen with dark yoke-fellows are necessitated to do.

The British soldier, with his black or tawny wife, I can only compare to two things of a totally different nature, which never can agree. The man with the feelings and habits of his native home, and the female with those of her own country. He with one mode of thinking, she with another. He has nothing whatever to do; she has everything; he gets his pay and spends the greater portion of it in drink, reserving little for domestic purposes;

while she has to supply the eatables without the wherewithal to pay for it, and yet he must support his dependants: where then are his means? How can he get on? He lives upon drink, and his family starve!

I have myself witnessed many distressing scenes among the poor pensioners which I would not have believed on other testimony than that of my own eyes. Men and women lying drunk in the same house; children rolling about in filth and dirt crying with hunger; husband and wife fighting with each other under the influence of liquor; men lying in the ditches or on the roadside, or reeling home in a disgraceful state of intoxication! Many is the poor fellow or wretched woman I have been obliged to see locked up in the cells, raving from the effects of drink, knocking themselves against the walls and doors in frantic efforts to get out. Poor wretches, and nothing is apparently done to check such a mode of life, such disgraceful proceedings!

Many of them, for want of something better to do, (or I should rather say for want of something to eat,) go down to the water-side, and stand up to their middles for hours and hours together with hook, line, and rod fishing. At times, they are successful, and many is the basketfull of beautiful fish I have bought from them fresh from the water, for the mere sum of one rupee, or even less. It is a curious sight to watch them fishing in the way I

have mentioned. I have often offered the old fellows the use of a boat which we kept, but they have always preferred standing in the water.

The effects of such amusement or employment, I cannot exactly tell, but I should say decidedly that that they must be injurious in the extreme. The hot burning sun over head; the cold salt water up to their waists; the body in a state of inactivity, and the constitution impaired by a lengthened residence in India, rendered worse by the effects of intemperance and irregular living. It is not possible that the poor men can last long: a good thing for Government I suppose, because the faster they die the less they have to pay them.

The pensioners not being held in any restraint, and not having any duty whatever to do, are, as may be expected, exposed to many opportunities of committing irregularities, of which little or no notice is taken, provided they are not riotous in the lines. They can go wherever they please and amuse themselves in any way they think proper. I have seen them many miles away from their homes wandering about in the most miserable manner possible. No wonder, then, that they lead the life they do!

I believe there is a circulating library for the soldiers, but few of them ever make use of it; the skittle-ground and arrack-shop are the places of general resort, and there they gamble, squabble

and fight, smoke and drink all day long, and either come or are carried home in a state of brutal drunkenness. There is also a *cricket-club* at which they play once or twice a-week, but as the ground is situated at a distance very few of them take the trouble to attend.

But while we were at Cuddalore our men created a degree of jealousy on the part of the pensioners, for we challenged them to play and had regular matches with them, and this set them to work with spirit and several very capital players turned out among them, who would otherwise never have thought of taking a bat in their hands. On these occasions, we would give the old fellows a regular dinner, and as a good feed was a treat of rare occurrence, many of them were induced to join the game more for the sake of the eating and drinking part of the business, than for any pleasure or interest in playing.

There are exceptions, however. Some of the pensioners are men of respectability, steady in their characters, well behaved and sober Christians; they bring up their families in a correct manner, educate their own children, and teach those of others also. They keep their cottages clean and tidy, neatly furnished with every comfort they can require. It used to be a pleasure to me to visit these men; and many has been the agreeable chat that I have had with some of them in their snug little rooms, (re-

minding one more of the interior of a countryman's cottage at home,) the good woman of the house, black or tawny, working at her needle; the children (cleanly clothed) sitting on stools or playing on a mat on the floor; the family cat purring on a chair, and the faithful dog sleeping at the doorway. The crockery neatly ranged on shelves, the table well scrubbed, and the floor sprinkled with sand, all betokening comfort and contentment, and showing to the visitor that, even where intemperance and vice hold sway, exceptions of sobriety and honest worth may still be found.

Many is the anecdote of adventures by flood and field that I have heard, of bloody battles, of the perilous escalade, the deadly breach, and hand to hand conflict, which have made my blood thrill within me as I sate listening to the gallant fellows as they related them. These men, these well-tried soldiers, are worth knowing, for they are better calculated to give any young inexperienced officer an insight into the roughs of a military life, than he can possibly glean from the society of his own immediate comrades and associates. It is the poor man in the ranks who has experienced the real hardships and vicissitudes of a soldier's career. He it is who knows and has known how to bear the privations of the campaign, the toils of the march, the exposures of midnight bivouac. And he is the man that can tell the beardless boy what the realities of

a soldier's profession are, and how he can best go through all that his duty calls upon him to perform.

It is my firm opinion, that the soldier who has risen from the ranks is the person best able to inform the mind of the youthful aspirant to the laurels of the profession, and I do not consider it in the least degree derogatory to any officer to hold converse with those hardy veterans who have fought and bled for our own dear country, and to whom every true Briton should be proud to speak or take by the hand and support in the tottering days of his old age. .

Every one knows that Cuddalore was in days of yore the seat of the Madras government, or rather the seat of the government of that part of India. Fort St. David is as famous in eastern history of former years as Fort St. George; in fact much more so. Here it was that the immortal Clive first commenced his glorious career, and laid the foundation of the military character of our noble coast army. Here it was that our handful of English adventurers first held out in maintaining their footing in the East; where our gallant countrymen bravely contended against their European as well as their Eastern enemies. It was in this neighbourhood that our native sepoys distinguished themselves in their conflicts with the tried soldiers of France, when two battalions of the former fought the latter with the bayonet and put them into confusion.

But Fort St. David is now no more; all that is to be seen of it are desolate ruins, dismantled walls, and dilapidated battlements. The masonry of the works was blown up by gunpowder, and the rubbish carried away in carts for the construction of roads in the new town, and elsewhere. The brick-work must have been very strong, for the cement holds together with such firmness that the shock of the powder does not separate the bricks.

Many a time and oft did I wander over those lonely ruins, a locality which was formerly the scene of military excitement, and the stage of glorious warfare, but now containing nothing but moss-grown ramparts, crumbled and crumbling to the ground. No gallant sentinel, with his trusty firelock and glittering bayonet, treads the pavement of the once bustling gateway;—no watchman now, save the solitary screech-owl, seated on some dismantled bastion! No dashing officers, in the gay uniform of their noble profession, moving about in their various employments; not a soul, excepting, perhaps, the native shepherd-boy, as he basks in the glare, tending a few sheep or goats, which are nibbling the scanty herbage from among the scattered ruins!

The civilians stationed at Cuddalore all reside in New-Town (or as the natives call it, "*Müngēe-coopūm*"). The whole of this cantonment is nicely laid out. The houses are large and commodious,

with neat gardens and compounds attached to them ; the roads and drives are good (thanks to the ruins of the old fort), and the whole is a very agreeable locality for invalids. The houses are scattered and separated from each other, which renders it healthy ; and, as the civilians have many servants, both public and private, attached to their establishments, they are enabled to keep their residences in good order, with the hedges well trimmed, trees properly cut, and the grass close, by the grazing of cattle or the scythe.

Cuddalore is, indeed, I think, a delightful spot to live in ; and, if my very humble opinion is worth anything, I may as well add, that, were it selected as one of our infantry stations, instead of some of those inland, the government would do a very wise thing, and confer a boon which would be vastly beneficial to the army. There is nothing like the sea-coast for the stationing of troops.

Let the interior of the country be looked after by irregulars and an efficient police, and let the army be placed by the water-side, where they can have plenty of fresh air and sea-bathing, with cheap and wholesome living ; the consequences will be, that our soldiery, both European and native, will become twice as healthy, twice as strong, and the better able to do their duty when called upon ; they cannot be generally considered so now.

My ideas regarding health and efficiency may

be erroneous ; but when people take into consideration how much our troops suffer from sickness, be it on a common line of march, or in the field, or against the enemy, or in most of our garrisons and cantonments, they may probably be of the same opinion. If more attention were paid to the proper locating of our men ; if better and more healthy stations were selected than those now held, and which are looked upon by them as so many yawning graves ; if more consideration were paid to their personal comforts, and enjoyments of wholesome air and exercise were afforded, if they had better feeding and were less worked ; if the "*encies of the service*," as this marching and counter-marching, these escort duties, these harassing guards, these unceasing drills, and these back-breaking inspection parades ; if all these irksome, tedious duties were, in some measure, diminished, the service would be greatly benefited.

If improvements of this nature were effected, I vouch for it, that the army, from right to left, and from flanks to centre, would be much more an army, in point of aptitude, for the work for which it is intended, than it now is.

At present, the men are worn out and dispirited by constant fretting and annoying, by paltry, non-sensical parades and drill, which do more harm than good, (for I say, that it is not the *frequency* of drilling that tends to make a corps perfect, but

the way in which they are taught); nothing but altering and changing of accoutrements and appointments ; nothing but going on guard over places which require no guarding; nothing but frequent stoppages for this, that, and everything else; nothing but moving from one station to another ; nothing but poverty and starvation in consequence; nothing but sickness and disease of all sorts, and in all shapes ; and nothing but dying by tens and twenties a-day directly the least epidemic comes among them or in their neighbourhood.

How can it be otherwise ? Place our regiments in healthy stations, and they will get on well enough, and be better soldiers in the end : keep them where they are, and they cannot help being inefficient.

In the New-Town are still to be seen what formerly were the quarters and barracks of the cadet company, which many of my older military friends may have every reason to remember. The buildings are now used as public offices for the civil department ; and the rooms which once accommodated many a gallant, dashing young fellow, since dead and gone, are now occupied by sable-browed scribes, turbaned peons, and dusty records. One part of the buildings had been converted into the public post-office, while another contained the civil treasury.

The quondam residence of the Governors of

Fort St. David, still standing, is the handsomest edifice in the whole place. It is kept in excellent repair, with beautiful gardens and grounds, and is now tenanted by the principal collector. The other quarters are occupied by the junior civilians. This place must have been something worth looking at in former days, if we may judge from the adjoining grounds, which appear to have been well laid out, exhibiting extensive avenues of fine tall majestic trees, in several directions, pleasant walks, and shady groves, reminding one forcibly of some beautiful park at home.

The "*māidān*," or open plain in front, is a splendid piece of ground, on which, it is to be presumed, the young soldiers used to be drilled; it is extensive enough for a brigade of three regiments to move upon with ease. What a thousand pities that troops of the line are not stationed here? What beautiful barracks, what a capital site for the men's huts, and what a lovely drill-ground! I hope the day may come when Cuddalore may yet be selected as a station for one or two regiments; it is admirably calculated for it; the articles of food are cheap, and the country is healthy. Troops were stationed here before, and I cannot imagine why they are not so now.

My chum and I were extravagant enough to purchase a tolerably good boat, a nondescript kind of a thing, however, between a canoe and a

cutter, made for rowing and sailing. In this boat, which was always kept moored close to our house, we had much enjoyment together, sailing or rowing one way or the other, as the wind and tide allowed us. Many a happy time I have spent in this self-same boat of ours ; and many the happy day I have passed with my worthy friend, as we glided along the smooth waters of this delightful little river, we two lying in the stern sheets, under a nice awning, either reading a book or chatting, while our boys, whom we instructed in the mysteries of boat-craft, would row, or steer, and tend the sails.

But we used not only to sail and row during the day ; we often times went on the water of an evening, when the night was fine, and the moon shining brightly. How beautiful is the silvery moon in India ! So calm, so serene, as she sheds her mild beams upon us, looking down on the earth, as it were, with a smile, and bidding us taste of the pleasures of her society ere she becomes obscured from our view by some dark murky cloud, which might be driven across her by the fickle changes of the evening breeze.

We would, on our excursions, row about for some time, and then rest on our oars, singing, talking, and laughing right merrily. Who says that there are not pleasures in the East ? There are as many true and social enjoyments to be found in India, and which can be partaken of (in modera-

tion) without any danger, as there are in old England ; and I maintain, that if our countrymen were to be a little more careful in their mode of living, they would be able to enjoy themselves as much as if in the best climate in the world.

Who is attacked with the liver complaint but the wine-bibber and drunkard ? Who is attacked with fever but the man exposing himself to the burning heat of an Indian sun, or the noxious exhalations of a damp country, or the poisonous atmosphere of the deadly jungle ? Who suffers from the torments of rheumatism but the man who puddles about up to his knees in wet and mud, with a hot, scorching sun above head, and becoming thus wet, takes no precautionary measures to prevent the ill effects ? Who suffers from dysentery, but from eating and drinking vile trash enough to poison him ? Who is carried off by cholera, but the man who has a pre-disposition to it from irregular living and bad habits of body ?

I maintain, that we can really and truly enjoy ourselves in India without any harm to ourselves ; the difficulty is in drawing a line, beyond the bounds of which discretion bids us not to step, but over which thoughtlessness and folly invariably contrive, despite our best resolutions, to push us ; and so it is. Our friends in England hear of father, mother, uncle, brother, or son, or daughter, or some relative, carried off by one complaint or ano-

ther, and always attribute the calamity to the baneful effects of the climate; whereas, if the truth were known, the unfortunate sufferer has brought it on himself by his own carelessness and indiscretion.

If the good folks in India were to lead a more steady, sober life, with proper attention to diet, regimen and plenty of healthy exercise, our friends and relations at home would be able to congratulate themselves that those they love so dearly in the land of the far, far East, are well and hearty, instead of having to mourn, as many have, at the arrival of almost every mail, for the loss of some relation, or friend.

The deaths that do occur in India are, in nine cases out of ten, to be traced, if not immediately yet with certainty, to some former act of imprudence, either in the enjoyments of the table or of the bottle, or of other irregularities, or of the pleasures of the field in quest of game, which the idly disposed indulge in to a great extent; so that the climate, I think, has very little to do with it, and I look upon that, with few exceptions, as good as any other portion of the globe; but let us proceed.

We used to have much fun in our evening excursions on the water, particularly if the night was dark. A candle placed in a lantern, or a torch held up while we sat quietly in our boat, would

attract the fish in shoals around us, leaping and splashing about the water most beautifully. Many a splendid "mullet" or "pamfret" (both exquisite fish, as many of my readers may well know,) have we caught by their jumping into our boat.

I remember on one occasion in particular, when a large "mullet" (which I think is something resembling a *whiting* both in appearance and in eating, though perhaps the "mullet" may be somewhat larger,) suddenly leaped out of the water and gave me such a salute across the mouth and nose with his tail, that the blow made me see more stars than if I were looking up to the skies. The force with which he came, nearly knocked me over the thwart, on which I happened to be sitting. Fresh from the water, he made a capital dish boiled at our dinner-table that evening. But we used to have visitors of all sorts and sizes in our boat, so much so, that at times we did not know how to dispose of them.

We found this a much more comfortable way of catching fish, (the dash I received on my mouth excepted,) than that adopted by the pensioners, to several of whom I recommended the experiment; but the old fellows preferred standing in the water to the accommodation of a boat; in truth, they were afraid to venture out of their depth, for many of them were generally half seas over, and they had

sense enough to know, that if they should happen to topple into the water they would most probably be drowned: the reader will allow that such a circumstance would be rather an unpleasant termination to their sport, and a very *damp* way of going out of the world.

## CHAPTER X.

Shooting Excursions—Shooting an Antelope at full gallop—Precautionary Warnings to the Sportsmen—Snipe-Shooting Costume—Diet on Shooting-Days—Danger of Excesses—Kites and Hawks—Sinking in a Bog—Misadventure by Water—The borrowed Boat—Unpleasant Consequences—Opportune Re-inforcement—Young Officer attacked by Native Fishermen—Safe Return of the Sportsmen to Head Quarters.

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My chum and I, with a party of our friends, had made arrangements for a day's shooting; so after enjoying a good dinner and good company to our hearts' content, we broke up in the evening to betake ourselves to our boats and sail down the river to the place of rendezvous, where we arrived late at night, after various and amusing adventures, such as sticking in the mud, very nearly upsetting, getting wet, &c.

By the time we came to the end of our journey, we were completely worn out, and delighted to reach our tents, which in the darkness of the night

we were two goods hours in finding, having one and all overshot the mark, and been obliged in consequence to pull back against wind and tide for a couple of miles.

We found our tents pitched and everything prepared for our reception, and after making our arrangements, we retired to our cots, determined to be up in the morning early, so as to breakfast and set off in sufficient time to have the whole day before us for the purposes of a good sport and plenty of game.

Our shikarrees (huntsmen) told us of quantities about six miles distant from our encampment, so that we were obliged to start for the ground on our horses, which had been sent from Cuddalore by land. It was fortunate we had them with us, because the distance was much greater than we had been informed, or anticipated. Always ride to your shooting-ground, if possible. Walking will probably knock you up before you begin your day's work, and what a great nuisance it is being fagged when you come among the game?

We enjoyed our trip exceedingly, with good sport and plenty of incident for fun and merriment.

The country we went over was well adapted for small game; and we had some smart runs after antelope as well as foxes and jackalls. One slight circumstance I must here mention, as having caused us much laughter at the expense of my poor chum,

who was certainly most unfortunate in all his undertakings. I remember he used to talk much about his riding (he was decidedly a very good horseman) and shooting off his horse's back, a thing at all times difficult of accomplishment, even on a pony regularly bred up to it, but more so on a fiery Arab horse and the rider particularly short-sighted.

We attempted to reason him out of the folly of the undertaking, but he cared not for all we said, and invariably declared that he would one day have an opportunity of showing us a practical illustration of its feasibility, which would, he hoped, satisfy us that it was not such a difficult matter as we all appeared to imagine. On the occasion I am now alluding to, he determined to put his intentions to the proof, and when some antelope were viewed on a rising ground at some distance off, he started in pursuit, taking a considerable détour to be able to come up with them without scaring them away.

Accordingly, he sallied forth armed with a small double-barrelled gun, which he had loaded with shot, not ball. On coming upon the antelope, he singled out a doe and her fawn, and charged after them at speed, keeping his horse to his mettle in beautiful style. On they went, helter-skelter, at a most break-neck pace; the sportsman with his gun ready cocked, on the look-out to have a good op-

portunity for a shot, and the antelope and her young one bounding away over the country with astonishing velocity.

At last in the course of the chase, the mother and its young one became separated, and the rider was on the point of levelling his gun at the former, when the fawn dashed across close under the very nose of the horse, who, seeing something crossing his path, shied and swerved to one side, while his master flew off on the other, falling to the ground with a heavy shock, and breaking his gun in pieces. The two fugitive antelopes wagged their tails and decamped, followed for a considerable distance by the gallant steed, who seemed, now that his master was "floored," to take up and enter into the spirit of the chase with as much zest as if his fallen lord were still on his back urging him onward.

It was not without great difficulty that the Arab was captured, though his master's voice, which he well knew, was put to its full force to bring the truant run-away to a stand-still; and it was an amusing sight to watch the two, the one running after the other with the débris of his fowling-piece in his hands, while the horse himself trotted away every time he got near him.

C—— B—— was well laughed at for this adventure, and I do not think he ever again made another attempt of the kind. It may be easy enough to fire with a pistol or carbine, or even a fowling-piece,

off a horse's back, at full gallop, at any large object, such as a man or a tiger, or a bison; but I should imagine that it must be a matter of difficulty to hit smaller objects, particularly antelopes, which run and bound, and leap in a most wonderful manner.

I never, in all my life, saw snipe in such abundance as I did on the occasion I am now referring to; they lay thick in every direction, and the difficulty we had to contend with was, what to do with all we shot. There are several low marshy islands in the river, covered, in places, with bushes and jungle; among these the snipes were found in thousands, and they would get up in such numbers, that we could not really fire at them with any degree of steadiness, for we knew not which to take first. On one spot particularly, I remember finding some millions of them.

By stooping down, and looking along the ground among the small trees, we could see them running about, and dodging in and out, in vast numbers; they were very tempting indeed, but to take pot shots at them was unfair, as well as unsportsman-like, so we used to send in our boys and drive them out, while we stood in convenient spots and had good shots at them as they flew past us. One of our men, however (natives are execrable shots—they cannot hit anything flying), fired a barrel among them, and killed some six or seven at once.

I have frequently brought down two brace of these birds with my two barrels, right and left.

And now let us have a few words on snipe-shooting. It is, indeed, capital sport, and very exciting, for the game is, at times, so plentiful that a man must be a poor shot not to be able to bag as many couple as will serve to feed him and his friends for weeks to come; at all events, any tolerable shot can always have his twenty brace in his bag by the end of a day's sport, (and I have known thirty, and forty, and even fifty couple, killed in less time than half a day,) though, at times, the very best hand may consider himself fortunate if he gets a brace or two altogether, after a hard fag of miles and miles; many a time have I trudged along and returned home without seeing a feather.

But, although the sport is excellent of its kind, I cannot help saying that it is a most dangerous pastime, attended with results serious, in more ways than one. In the first place, consider the exposure. The sportsman has to be out in the sun, from between nine and ten o'clock in the morning until three and four in the afternoon, with little or no rest; the hot, burning blaze above-head, and no screen from it, except a straw hat, with a plaintain leaf, or wet towel inside it; no covering for the body, except a light shooting coat, and that, as well as every other article, perfectly saturated with perspiration.

In the second place, the ground on which snipe

lay, is invariably wet; so wet, generally, that the sportsman has to walk, for miles, up to his knees in mud; the feet must, of consequence, become wet, notwithstanding every means adopted to avoid it (no one can expect to kill snipe if he is afraid of wetting his feet); to say nothing of the probabilities of their being attacked by leeches, which are to be found in the paddy-fields and swamps, and the bites of which frequently create ulcers, that take a considerable time to cure.

The body, from the head down to the knees, is in a state of heat, causing the pulse to beat, I know not at what rate; the legs, from the knees downwards, are cold and clammy, from the mud and water; the exertion of walking over such heavy ground, and the excitement of shooting, are very great; perhaps there is a strong land-wind blowing, or, as is often the case, a shower of rain drenches you to the skin, already moist with perspiration; all these are objections of so dangerous a nature as to render the amusement one of greater risk than is consistent with prudence for any man to take.

But, in the third place, there is the thirst, which must be quenched, either by drinking the stagnant cold water of the paddy-fields, or of some brook; or the contents of a bottle of brandy and water, beer, or cold tea. The exertions of walking, and the heat, must engender thirst, and that must be allayed; the bottle has frequent applications to it,

and, when that is emptied, the dirty water, above-mentioned, is gulped down in large quantities, to the no small injury of the thirsty drinker.

Snipe-shooting, therefore, though the sport is excellent, may, at all times, be looked upon as the most foolish and hair-brained amusement that can possibly be indulged in. I think so, decidedly, and I would not now go after such sport as I used so foolishly to do in former days, if I were paid thousands for it. Young fellows look upon it as I once did.

“Oh, there is no harm in it!” they will exclaim. “It is capital exercise! What’s the use of a gun if you don’t shoot with it? and why should we not shoot snipe, as well as our neighbours? As for wet feet, who cares for them? We’ll keep the cold out, by taking something warm within!”

This is all very good, doubtless, and the enjoyment of the sport has everything in it calculated to lead on to its indulgence, to too great an extent, but, young men little think of the consequences; those come afterwards; nor do they ever allow themselves to attempt to draw a line, where they might stop; and nothing will stop them, except it is a stroke of the sun, a violent dysentery, or a sharp bout of rheumatism. These stop them fast enough; then, indeed, comes the cry of “*peccavi!*” but that is too late. I have known people who have never recovered from rheumatism, or dysentery, or fever,

caught in snipe-shooting. I am thankful in being able to say that I never suffered any inconvenience whatever, from this description of shooting; and I am glad I left off when I did; for, had I continued much longer, I might not now be consoling myself at having escaped what so many have suffered from, and by which many, alas, have forfeited their lives.

But I must confess that I attribute my good fortune, in never having become ill, more to care and regimen, than anything else in this world. I had a good constitution, and that is a great thing; but, in addition to this, and by way of assisting that constitution, I used to be particularly careful in what I did as regards my eating and drinking, and my other bodily comforts. I may as well here mention my mode of proceeding, in case anybody might feel disposed to adopt it; the rule is simple, and only requires a little self-determination in adhering to it.

Before starting on a snipe-shooting expedition, I always made a good breakfast off plain diet, (the plainer the better,) avoiding everything with salt or sugar in it; as both are calculated to create thirst; plain bread, or toast and butter, or boiled rice with eggs, were generally my eating part of that meal; my drink was weak tea, made with little or no sugar or milk.

My servant always carried a bottle of cold tea, covered with a wet towel, in case I was thirsty

(it is the most harmless as well as the most refreshing beverage you can have on such occasions); and to avoid the chances of getting dry in the mouth, I alway carried a *pebble* in it, or a bit of lead, which kept up the saliva, and prevented even the inclination to drink.

As regards attire, I always wore a good thick flannel shooting-jacket (with skirts covering the hips), under which there was a woollen waistcoat. These are excellent coverings for the upper body, and sufficiently resist the hot winds, and prevent their penetrating to the skin, so as to check perspiration. Thick corderoy, or fustian trousers, fitting loosely to the body, and coming down to the ankles; worsted socks, and thick strong shoes, or laced-boots, completed the costume, with the exception, by-the-bye, of the hat, or cap. I always preferred the straw-hat, with a broad brim, and covered with white linen, of some sort, slightly padded with cotton. Inside I had some fresh plaintain or cabbage leaves, which offered a tolerable resistance to the heat of the sun, and kept the upper part of the head pretty cool.

This attire, with little or no difference, is generally what is adopted by old snipe-shooters, and is, I think, the best. Inexperienced hands however go out as lightly clothed as they can, because they think it keeps them cool; but it is a mistake in more ways than one, as the heat of the sun, the

land winds, and the rain, soon penetrate, and the perspiration quickly wets them through ; so that the body, in a state of excitement, becomes subjected to such a variety of cold and heat as to render it susceptible to all the evils of the sport.

Whenever I felt fatigued, I would sit or lie down under a tree, for a little rest is an excellent refresher, better than all the drink in the world ; but I never stopped beyond five minutes or so, for fear of chill, which should be carefully avoided. When my day's work was done, I would get away from the influence of any wind, throw off all my wet things and put on a complete suit of dry, which one of my followers always carried with him, I would wash my hands and face, and thus dried and comfortable I would ride home as fast as I could.

When there arrived I would jump into a warm bath for about five minutes, put on fresh clean clothes again, take a cup of tea with a bit of dry toast, and go to bed. After a good nap of two hours, I would sit down to a plain meal of roast or boiled, a pint of beer, generally mixed with water, being the strongest drink I ever took. This was my regimen as regards diet, and I think the method I adopted, (plain feeding, temperance, and good rest after the sport was over,) was by far the wisest and the safest, if needs must be that you do indulge in the sport of snipe-shooting ; but sorry I am to

say, that the plan usually adopted is very different to the one I have mentioned.

Nobody ever thinks of changing clothes ; oh no ! It is a great bore, takes too much trouble, and looks effeminate. And who ever heard of tea and toast after a hard day's work ? Ridiculous in the extreme ! Why, it is not sufficient to support nature. We'll have some good eating, nice rich stews, with hot curries and plenty of pickles; we'll drink nothing but sangaree, claret, and mugged-beer, as cool as ice ; and we'll have some nice rum-punch as a finisher ; and we'll smoke too, and pass a jolly evening instead of going early to bed.

Yes, this is all very fine doubtless, and sounds well. The generality of sportsmen do all this, and more to, and the result will need no explanation, it will speak forcibly for itself. Let the reader fancy to himself the man who adopts this mode of proceeding. He has been out all day grilling in a hot sun ; the brain, and indeed the whole system, is in a state of ferment ; and, to make matters worse, he adds fuel to the fire, by swallowing some three or four quarts of trash, which the head is not able to bear, and the stomach is too weak to retain ; a sickness of a distressing nature is, in nine cases out of ten, sure to ensue, which either terminates fatally, or renders the unfortunate individual a wretched invalid to the end of his life. Surely

then it is better to be on the safe side by avoiding such irregularities, than by running such risks in partaking of and indulging in them.

I have often seen men come home from snipe-shooting worn out with fatigue, the clothes wet from head to foot, the face burnt and red from the heat, and they have sat in their wet things for hours after, without even thinking of changing, but swallowing tumbler upon tumbler of cold sangaree, mulled claret, or beer, smoking cigars, and drinking again until they were perfectly overcome with the effects of their potations, and were carried to their beds in a state of insensibility. Yet people say there is no harm in it:—wearied nature must be supported by the comforts and good things which she provides. A very foolish argument indeed; devoid of common sense, and showing nothing, in my opinion, but downright madness.

How is it that the sportsman in India is attacked with dysentery and cholera, but by over-dosing himself with bad water, sangaree, beer, and brandy? How is he attacked with rheumatism, but by walking all day long up to his knees in mud and water, or by exposure to the wind in wet clothes? How has he a stroke of the sun, but by neglecting to cover his head properly?

The young sportsman may rely on it that he is far better by abstaining from such exposures, by

avoiding such indulgences, and by adopting a safer course of temperance and sobriety. A man has no occasion to drink to become a good sportsman. He can enjoy the pleasures of the field much better without it.

Snipe-shooting is at all times objectionable, but particularly so in the mid-day sun ; I would therefore recommend young people not to take to it to any great extent. I think the morning the best, the pleasantest, and the safest time ; the birds are wilder certainly at that hour, but they afford an opportunity for sharp quick shooting, and I think the exercise does good before the sun is up ; but we will now have done with the subject, lest I be considered prosy.

Snipe, as well as partridges, quail, and other small game, are the common prey of the innumerable species of kites, falcons, and hawks, which are to be found in all parts of the country. I have frequently seen these creatures pounce down and seize upon them, and many a time have I been deprived of those I have killed or wounded by these birds picking them up and flying off with them. I remember a long chase I had after a Brahminy kite with a snipe in his claws.

I had a difficult task in following him, for being obliged to be continually looking up and running over swampy ground, at times up to my knees in

mud, I did nothing but flounder and stumble about to the great amusement of my companions, who were watching my movements.

Mr. Kite, after a long flight, during which time he kept tearing his prey with his beak and talons, settled at last on a solitary palmira tree, in the midst of what appeared to be a piece of dry grassy ground. I ran after him as fast as I could go, and when within about eighty yards fired off one of my barrels to frighten him. This had the desired effect. The rattling of the shot among the leaves of the tree alarmed him, and he flew off, dropping the mangled remains of the snipe on to the ground.

I instantly started to pick it up, and had not reached to within half way when I found myself suddenly sink up to my breast in a quagmire; and, had I not fortunately clung to a small bush close by, I should most likely have sunk altogether; however my arms and gun supported me until my friends came to my assistance, and by dint of pulling extricated me from my unpleasant situation.

But this was nothing ; the climax of my disasters was, that all my powder and caps, and wadding were damaged, and I was in such a state of filth that it became necessary that I should go home to my tent, thus losing my day's sport, and getting into the bargain the dirtiest wetting I ever had in my life. These bogs are very frequently met with in the country along the coast. That in the neigh-

bourhood of Cuddalore alone abounded with marshy rotten ground, and many serious accidents, attended with loss of life, have occurred through people sinking into them.

I have before described the doings of a pic-nic party ; the shooting, the eating and drinking, and smoking, and all the concomitants thereof. I will now, therefore, with the reader's permission, trouble him with an old story. All pic-nics are the same, with little or no variation ; suffice it to say, we were out for three days, and returned home to our quarters, some by boat and others on horse-back, after having enjoyed ourselves exceedingly on the excursion.

The party in the boat, of which I was one, did not reach home without adventure, for we contrived to start off at such a time of the evening, that before we had proceeded half a mile the tide set in against us, and the current shortly became so violent, that we could not make way ; indeed, we found ourselves, in spite of most strenuous exertions with our oars, drifting back instead of moving forward.

This was very provoking indeed, and what made matters worse was, that we had hard rain adding to our comforts all the time, which drenched us to the skin. We had started our domestics off in the morning, and had arranged to dine together at home, immediately after arrival, which we expected

would have been about half-past seven o'clock ; those who had ridden on were to wait for those who were to come by water. At the rate we were progressing, we calculated to reach home by twelve at night.

We tried to push on by poles, but had only our boat-hooks, which proved to be too short for the depth of water, so that was knocked on the head, and it was finally proposed, as a *dernière résort*, that we should drag the boat along the bank, and engage stray natives, if any passed that way, to assist us in getting along. It would not have done to have left the boat where it was, and start off by ourselves, as the probabilities were she would have been either destroyed, or stolen ; so bring her on with us we were determined, by some means or other.

We had two servants in the boat with us ; these, together with three of ourselves, formed a party strong enough for the labour ; but it was, indeed, a great nuisance to have to do such abominable work, particularly in the rain, drenched through and in the dark. However, there was no alternative, either we must drag or we must lag, and as there was a dinner in the distance, we resolved at all events to try our best and make a good pull and a good push for its enjoyment.

The mode of proceeding being arranged, we set too with a will, the two strongest and the three

weakest being yoked together to the drag rope. We pulled along right merrily for a considerable time, though it was deuced hard work, having to follow the windings and irregular broken ground of the bank on which we were travelling, sometimes sticking ourselves up to our hips in the mud, and at times the boat coming to a check by bumping, through the carelessness of the man at the helm.

We got on but slowly after all, and what was worse, one or two of the working party got knocked up into the bargain. It was between eight and nine o'clock in the night, when we fancied we could distinguish a lull in the storm, and a slackness in the rush of water, a few stars showed themselves and the rain abated. We resolved upon trying our oars again, and pulled away for some time, making tolerable progress until we reached an island in the middle of the river, where we got out, and went to a hut, in which we expected to find some men from whom we might obtain assistance.

We now knew our position, and were aware that our distance from home was about three miles, or thereabouts. Not a soul was found in the hut; we therefore determined on pulling the boat ashore, high and dry, which we succeeded in doing, after much trouble and exertion. We threw out the little grapnel to prevent her drifting away with the next tide, and quitting her, started on foot for the further extremity of the island, the nearest to any

human habitation, to see what we could do towards an attempt to get home.

On reaching the point, we stood hailing for upwards of an hour, until we were hoarse with bawling, but no answer being received, one of our party swam across to the opposite side, which he reached in safety. We presently saw a dark object approaching, which to our great joy proved to be a boat, sculled along by our friend, who had just left us. He had found the boat stuck in the mud, but being a powerful person he had contrived to get her afloat, and pushed off to bring us across. We were not long in jumping in, and soon arrived, but we had scarcely landed when a crowd of some twenty or thirty natives surrounded us, vociferating and saying that they had come to catch the rascals who had taken away their boat.

The fellows were becoming insolent, when we met with an unexpected reinforcement to our little party, by the arrival of some half dozen old European pensioners, who were returning home from some fishing excursion. Seeing a crowd, and one or two of them recognising our voices, they got hold of their sticks and cleared the way, when the rascals soon dispersed. Had they not come up the chances are there would have been a fight and some broken heads, as the Mopleys of Cuddalore were anything but peaceably inclined during that period.

The mob having dispersed, we started homewards in company with the gallant old soldiers, who informed us that the country people had a great aversion to the pensioners, and there was no doubt but that they had taken *our honours* for some of them in the darkness of the night, particularly as we had come among them in the way we did. They also said that the natives very frequently attacked them in large parties, and severely maltreated the poor old fellows, whenever they could catch them alone; they were, therefore, in self-defence obliged to keep together.

Our friends had long looked out for us, and our not coming had made them surmise a hundred accidents. Some fancied that the boat must have upset and the party drowned! Others imagined that the tide had swept us out of the bar into the sea! Others, again, surmised that we must have gone in the opposite direction, taking the wrong turning! While some declared we must have been attacked and murdered by natives!

After this adventure, we reached home all safe, and finished the night with a hot supper and a bowl of excellent port-wine-negus, which did away with all the ill effects of a thorough soaking, exposure and fatigue, and we went to our beds none the worse for all that we had undergone.

Port-wine-negus is a capital night-cap after a wetting, but it must not be abused by a surplus

quantity ; moderation should be the ruling principle in partaking of any liquor, and, I think, in none more so than truly generous wine, good old port, which, though not very popular in India, is still much more to be preferred on certain occasions than those delicious French wines, champagne, burgundy, and claret, which are such favourites among the *bons vivans* of the east.

## CHAPTER XI.

An unexpected Adventure in the Paddy-fields of the French Territory—Shooting at Quail and hitting a Man—The Head Man of the Village—Trip to Pondicherry under peculiar Circumstances—Curious Procession—Polite Reception of the Accused by the Authorities—A miserable Hotel—An Interview with the Governor—A Ramble over the Town of Pondicherry—Superior Cleanliness of the Villages under the French—Comparative Liabilities to Disease—The Indo-French—Their Women—French Taste and French Luxuries—The Colonel's Cask of Claret—The Shops—Dinner at the Governor's.

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RELATING our adventures in the last chapter, connected as it was with snipe-shooting, brings me to an occurrence which I cannot do better than narrate in this, in the hope that it will be amusing to the reader, and give him an idea of how great a matter might be made out of mere accident, and how necessary it is that people should not be too premature or too hasty in their actions, and more particularly so in their contact or intercourse with

the ignorant natives of India, or any other uneivilized country.

The circumstances connected with the subject in question are simple, and what occurs, or may occur, without anything of great consequence ensuing; but, in this instance, matters might have terminated seriously in more ways than one, and there is no knowing what mischief might have been done; but to my story.

It so happened that the captain of our detachment and I, one day mounted our horses and went out in the direetion of the Pondicherry district, with no other object in view than that of passing an hour or two before our dinner in shooting snipe, whieh we knew to be in abundance in that neighbourhood. The occasion in question was not the first on which we had gone that way. We frequently walked over many a mile of ground in the French territory, without any hindrance from the civil authorities of the villages, or from the natives themselves.

On the present occasion, we wandered about the fields, and shot away, uninterrupted by any body; and accompanied each by our native servants, and our horse-keepers following the high road with our horses. We had been tolerably successful in our sport, but, not satisfied with the state of the bag, we prolonged our beat towards some standing paddy, ripe for the reapers, who were busy in all

directions cropping the grain. The ground over which we had been walking was wet and muddy, that on which the paddy grew was dry, the water being invariably drained off as soon as the grain is fit for cutting.

My comrade and I approached a field, in which two men were squatted, reaping; they were concealed from our view, and I think we must have been some ninety or a hundred yards from them. As we walked on, we were startled by some quail, which got up from under our feet; at these my friend fired, and killed two. The shot flew in the direction of the reapers; one of whom happened to get peppered pretty smartly, though not hurt seriously. I think about a dozen, or so, of the shot (*small snipe*) penetrated the outer skin, and drew a little blood. Upon being hit, the fellow jumped up, threw off his clothes (of which, certainly, he had not much), flung his reaping-knife on the ground, and yelled most vociferously.

To us, the poor man appeared to have been seriously injured; and we lost no time in running up to him, and examining his wounds, which we found were nothing at all; and that he had cried before he was really hurt. We told him not to be afraid; but the more we assured him, the more he capered about, and the more he howled, evidently making much ado about nothing, in the hopes of extracting a rupee or two from us, which,

had such a cure been forthcoming, would have proved the best plaster he could possibly have had.

The shrieking and yelling of this fellow attracted the attention of others in the neighbouring "*khets*" (or fields), and they came running up to where we stood, and crowded around us, to the number of upwards of a hundred and fifty men, armed with reaping-hooks, knives, and bamboos, with which they were one and all clamouring loudly to administer a little "*addie*" (as they call a beating) upon our sacred persons !

Here was a pretty predicament for two British officers ! . Surrounded by a mob of black "*ryots*" (peasants, rioting most loudly, certainly), armed with knives and sticks, and vowing vengeance upon our heads !

We desired our servants to tell them who and what we were, and that the man being hit was purely accidental, that he was not in any way hurt, and that the gentleman was sorry for what had happened. But the more we attempted to explain, the more loudly did they vociferate against us.

One man in particular (a huge fellow, standing six feet high, with a thundering big bludgeon in his hand, and a knife in his waist-cloth), kept shaking himself to and fro, and saying that we should be both well thrashed ; that the man's having been hit was intentional, and that we were no officers,

but a couple of runaway soldiers; concluding by declaring that they would take us up to the village authorities hard by, where we could make what explanation we liked. So there we stood, surrounded by these villains, and not knowing how matters would terminate:—

“What shall we do?” inquired I; “we shall have to make a fight for it, I fear. These rascals seem determined to have a brush with us.”

“I fear so, too,” replied my friend; “but let us be cool, and do not allow any of them to touch you or your gun—are you loaded?”

“Yes; both barrels,” answered I; “but had not one of them better run to the village, and call their head man? We may still be able to conciliate matters.”

“They have gone for him,” said N——. “In the meantime stand close to me, and look out. I think we shall have to fight for it; and, if we show a bold front, it is probable they will run. But who have we here? The head man, I suppose; let us speak to him; he looks a rogue!”

The new arrival was the head man of the village. He was followed by three sepoys, in the French uniform; and a posse of others, who had evidently come out to see the fun. The former strutted up to us, and addressed us in French, bad enough, it was, too.

“*Vous avez blessé ce person ci,*” said the fel-

low; “pourquoi avez-vous fait cela? Repondez vite!”

My friend, although a first-rate French scholar, could not, for the life of him, recall the language sufficiently to enable him to answer; at last, he spoke; but whether the man really did not understand him, or pretended not, I am uncertain, though I suspect it was the latter.

“Oui vraiment!” answered my friend; “mais,—je vous assure que—hang it—it was purely by accident—the deuce take the French, I cannot speak a word of it!—can’t you help me?”

“Not a jot,” says I; “but there’s nothing like trying. I may contrive to make myself understood; so here goes—Eh bien, monsieur cutwaul! est ce votre nom? Ecoutez, s’il vous plait; nous sommes bien faché que ce gentilhomme ici a malheureusement blessé ce paysan, mais ce n’est pas beaucoup; the fellow is not hurt a bit!”

“Not hurt a beet,” repeated the man, pretending ignorance of the English, though he had it as easy as French. “Que dites vous? Il faut vous aller à Pondichère avec ces gens d’armes, donnez vous les armes!”

“I’ll see you at Jericho first, you rogue!” exclaimed my companion. “Et je vous dis que nous sommes les officiers Anglais, from Cuddalore, which place I command; et, si vous dare to lay hands on me, or this gentleman here, you stand the

consequences ! What do you mean by ordering British officers to be seized ? Let one of these rabble, or one of your men there, approach, and do you look out ! Tell these fellows to be gone ! Vous voulez de l'argent, mais you shall not have one pice, pas de tout ! Allez vous en !”

“ Non ! non !” exclaimed the French cutwaul ; “ rendez moi vos armes !”

Upon which one of the gens d'armes laid his hands on my friend's gun, and another seized hold of mine ; to wrestle them out of their hands, and knock them both down, was the work of a moment. There were evident signs of a rush at us by the crowd, so I cocked my gun, and levelling it at the tall fellow above mentioned, I covered the rascal's heart, which was doubtless palpitating most eagerly to give us his threatened “ *addie* ;” the crowd was closing on us, and the shouts became louder than ever ; my finger was on the trigger, I was just on the point of pulling ; a moment more, and the tall ryot would have slept with his fathers, when the muzzle was knocked up by my friend, who called out,

“ For heaven's sake, do not fire ! Give up the gun ; it is better that we should do so ; if not, there may be a serious row. They are too strong for us. Give up your gun at once !

I gave up my gun. “ Pity is it, indeed,” said I, “ that British officers should yield to such a set of

rascals ! How I should have liked to have knocked that tall fellow over, and sent him to the regions of darkness !”

“ You were near enough doing so, you fiery young scamp,” replied my comrade, “ and glad am I you did not, for we should both have had our throats cut by them. You must prepare for a hot journey to Pondicherry ; this villain of a cutwaul appears to be bent on our being taken there, and we will go, if it is only to have that fellow trounced for his impertinence. But we will ride, I vote ; where can our horses be ?”

They were close at hand, so we dispatched one of our boys to call them. On their coming, the people and the cutwaul would not allow us to mount, in case, as they said, we should be running away. We, however, told them, that we had no intention of doing so, and they therefore condescended to permit us to ride.

It was evident that the cutwaul had found out his mistake, on seeing that we had such respectable looking nags, with servants in livery. He had taken us for two European soldiers, and wished to come the bully over us. He changed his tone considerably when he found out who we really were, and even went so far as to tell us we were at liberty to walk or mount, whichever we wished ; he salaamed to us, and addressed us with a “ *Sir*,”

which showed us what a double-faced rogue he was. Had the man told us he would allow us to go home, we resolved on not doing so, but made up our minds to pay Pondicherry a visit, for we knew well what the consequences would be.

The prisoners (for such we were in every sense of the word) being then allowed to ride, we mounted our horses, and might easily have cleared ourselves of the crowd, and made off; but we were determined on revenge, so sate still until every thing was ready for a start. We dismissed our two servants, and desired them to get to Cuddalore as fast as they could, to mention what had occurred to all our friends, and to send us a supply of clothes, uniforms, and other requisites.

When all was ready, we made a start. The escort consisted of a corporal and three privates of the *gens d'armes*; they were natives, dressed in green uniforms, and black leather accoutrements, and queer looking caps, and armed with *empty bayonet scabbards!* They had not a firelock among them! They were fine looking fellows, and, I must confess, they were far better dressed than our men. It was about twelve o'clock when we commenced our journey; the distance, I should say, at a rough guess, about twelve miles. The sun was terribly hot, and we were wet through from perspiration, besides being much fatigued; how-

ever, there was no help for it, and we thought that the best way was to put a good face on the matter, and enjoy our trip as much as we could.

"You know," said my companion, "we shall not, probably have such another holiday, so I vote for being merry, and see if we do not come off with flying colours."

"Agreed!" said I; "we will enjoy ourselves, and Pondicherry is just the place for fun. But, it is very hot! What a mess we are both in! Mud, from the hips downwards! A pretty figure we shall cut marching into the town! I wonder who and what they will take us for?"

We were, indeed, in a pretty plight. Men's shooting habiliments in India are certainly not so dandified as in England; in fact, we could not be dandies if we wished it. The heat would not admit of it, and the mud and water would very soon spoil our personal appearance, as well as our clothes. The dress we had on, when we rode into Pondicherry, did not, in any one way, add to the respectability of the outer man; so that, to look at us, our persons were not calculated to make a favourable impression on the people of the place.

My comrade's arrangements were very amusing. He told the sepoys that they must be very careful, and manage to dispose of themselves so as to prevent the possibility of our running away. He

made the corporal himself form the advanced guard; and his three men he placed, one on each flank, and one between the two culprits, while a whole lot of fellows, with our guns, brought up the rear. The sepoys, when they came to us, were completely unarmed, all that they had with them were their uniforms; one fellow was minus his belts, another had no pouch, a third wanted a stock, and the fourth had no chaco: this was our escort! How easily we might have escaped!

However, we wended our way right merrily, and in excellent spirits, singing, and laughing, and conversing about what we should do when taken up before the French authorities, which we determined we would most certainly insist upon. Through every village that we passed, our escort borrowed something in the shape of arms, or accoutrements, or some article of dress; and, by the time we reached the neighbourhood of the town, they were completely equipped, and looked something more like soldiers than they did when they first seized us.

It was highly amusing to see the people staring at us as they passed on the road, evidently wondering at the cause of our being so situated; and I must say, I could not help feeling an inward boiling of anger at being thus scrutinized, and, probably, taken for thieves, or murderers. I felt

greatly disposed to knock some of our beggarly escort on the head, when I heard them, more than once, answer inquiries made by the passengers.

"They are prisoners," they would say, "taken up for shooting a man!"

"They are a couple of European soldiers from Cuddalore," another would say; "they have been committing murder; they will be hanged!"

Before entering the suburbs, we halted, and my friend made the corporal and his guard fix their bayonets, and take their proper places; we only wanted a drummer to tap us into the town, to the "*rogue's march*," so as to give timely notice of our coming. We paraded right through the streets, my friend and I on horseback, our escort in front, flank, and rear, and, by way of retinue, followed by a motley crowd of upwards of two hundred natives, shouting and hallooing as we went along! What a sight! British officers, and gentlemen, brought in by a rabble crew, and that of the worst description of natives! And marching, as prisoners, into a French town!

We were halted at the door of the commandant's house, were marched in, and our arrival, together with their version of the circumstances connected with our arrest, duly reported. The commandant was at his dinner with his family: he jumped up immediately, ran out, and saw us standing in the verandah.

"Ah!" exclaimed he, with surprise depicted in his countenance; "qu'est-ce-que tout ceci?"

My friend found it a matter of difficulty to get on with his French, and became very much annoyed at it. In the meantime, our arrival had attracted the attention of the whole of the commandant's family, who crowded to the front room to have a look at the strangers, and hear all that was going on. There were two or three very pretty girls among them, and I could not help turning round to gaze, leaving my companion to settle the matter with the commandant; he improved in his language as he went on, and became quite fluent.

Upon being questioned, the corporal declared that he had brought us to Pondicherry by the cut-waul's orders, and that we had been taken up for shooting a villager.

This astonished the commandant; the more particularly when he heard that we were officers from Cuddalore, that my friend commanded the detachment there, and that I was one of his subalterns. Immediately he put on his uniforms, and quitted the house, desiring his wife and family to entertain us during his absence, which would not be of long duration. I had, during this interval, contrived to win a smile or two from some of the owners of the bright eyes peeping through the venetians; and one by one the young ladies had ventured out, and by the time the commandant had left us, they were

four of them as pretty girls as I would wish to see anywhere, standing behind my chair, making their remarks, and giving vent to their feelings by loud expressions of surprise and regret at the unpleasantness of our situation.

Wine, cakes, and fruit were brought; of the former we each partook of a glass, bowing, hand to heart, to the old as well as the young, who surrounded us, who all acknowledged the compliment, and we amused ourselves exceedingly well until the return of the commandant with another military man in plain clothes, with the ribbon of the Legion of Honour in his button hole, who was introduced to us as the A.D.C. of the governor.

This gentleman addressed us with much politeness, and assured us that the Marquis de Saint Simon, the governor, was much concerned at our detention, and desired to make us the most honourable amends, as British officers; that we were at perfect liberty to return to Cuddalore at our own convenience, but that he trusted we should give him the pleasure of our company during our stay at Pondicherry.

Saying which, the A.D.C. made us a low bow in a most gentlemanly manner, drew himself up, and looked the picture of a French gentleman. This politeness in conveying a message in such very civil and apologetic terms, entirely did away with all angry feelings, and my friend bowed and bowed

again, and a variety of complimentary language passed between the two.

The purport of my friend's reply was, that we should take advantage of the governor's permission to remain a few days at Pondicherry, and that we accepted with many thanks so polite an invitation to partake of the hospitality of so great a man, and so brave a soldier, as the Marquis de Saint Simon. He then inquired for an inn, and the A.D.C. immediately offered to conduct us to one.

Having made our acknowledgments to the commandant, we bowed to the whole party, and left the house, arm in arm with the A.D.C. We walked thus through the streets, talking and laughing away as if nothing had happened. We certainly did not appear to advantage, and the sight of two persons dressed as we were, walking with the well-attired, soldier-like gentleman, so well known at the place, no doubt caused surprise, and gave ample food for surmise, as to who we really could be, particularly as our arrival had been bruited about the streets, and we had been represented as two soldiers from Cudalore, taken up for murder !

Arrived at the auberge, the A.D.C. secured rooms, and ordered everything comfortable for us, after which he shook us both warmly by the hands and left us to ourselves. We were, the reader may imagine, not a little rejoiced to come to a halt and rest ourselves. It was late in the day when we

found that we had got to the end of our journey, and we determined on resting for some time, and turning our captivity into a jaunt of pleasure, and of enjoying ourselves while we had an opportunity of so doing.

“ Well, here we are !” exclaimed my friend, “ All’s well that ends well ! How fortunate we did not fight ! The chances are, had we done so, you and I would not be seated here now. You young dog, you were as near committing murder as possible ?”

“ Granted, my brave capitano,” replied I, “ but was it not an understood thing that we were to fight ?”

Our conversation was interrupted by the arrival of our servants from Cuddalore, bringing us supplies of clothes and other *et ceteras*, requisite for our respectable appearance in such a fashionable place as Pondicherry. My friend received also a letter from his lady, expressive of surprise at our adventure, but at the same time giving vent to no feelings of alarm or anxiety on her husband’s account, who, she said, she knew well was fully able to take care of himself, concluding her epistle by a firm belief that the whole affair was nothing but a joke which we had concocted by way of an excuse for going to Pondicherry for a holiday.

The accommodation and fare afforded us at that miserable apology for an hotel, at Pondicherry, were

in keeping with the whole of the establishment. In the first place, the rooms allotted to us were in a filthy state, the beds swarming with vermin of a peculiar description ; the furniture broken, and the floors covered with tattered dirty matting. In the eating department they were just as bad, if not worse. We had had nothing in the shape of solid food since we left home, and were consequently feeling very anxious for our dinner, which we had ordered immediately, and had anticipated some nice French cookery with a glass of first-rate claret. But we were both wofully disappointed in every way.

The dinner placcd on the table, after a considerable delay, was not fit to be touched by a dog ! The fish was bordering on decomposition ; the soup was like ditch-water ; the mutton was as tough as shoe-leather ; the potatoes were not half boiled ; and as for the rice pudding, it smelt so forcibly of rotten eggs that we were under the painful necessity of having it removed !

So much for our eatables ; now for the beverages. The beer was just fit to be used for blacking bottles or to be given to the pigs ; it was execrable ; the claret was absolutely so abominably sour, that we sate making wry faccs for sometime after tasting it. If the claret was so bad, what must the other wines be ? So we resolved upon having none at all, but called for a bottle of cognac, which we hoped

would make up for the other vile trash that we had been trying ; but this too was scarcely palatable, and bad was the best with the whole turn out ! As for the coffee ! It makes me even at this distant period of time quite sick to think of it.

We therefore, for want of better food, made up our minds to drown our sorrows in a good puff at a cigar, and a glass of hot grog, after which we retired to our miserable bed-rooms in any mood but the amiable. I do not think that two people could have gone to bed more discontented and sulky than we did.

The day after the occurrences above related, we took an early breakfast (which by the way was a shade better than the meal of the preceding evening) ; we dressed ourselves in our uniforms and walked over to the Government House, which was not far from our hotel. On our arrival, we were ushered into the presence of the great man, who received us with that politeness of manner so peculiarly French, and addressed us with so much civility, that all feelings of a determination on our side to play an angry part, for the maltreatment which we had experienced, and the bad accommodation and fare of the dirty hotel, vanished at once.

This gentleman came up to us, and shook us warmly by the hand, begged us to be seated, and forthwith apologized in plain language, on the part of the French government, for the outrage that had

been committed on our persons, by our being brought as we were to Pondicherry !

Having accepted a most polite invitation to dinner, we were bowed out by his excellency very politely. Previously to our return to the hotel, we whiled away the time before dinner by wandering over the town, visiting the shops and spending our money.

Pondicherry is a very well laid-out, clean town ; the houses are, for the most part, well-built and substantial ; some of them are, however, old and decaying. The streets are of an uniform breadth, constructed with remarkable regularity, and intersecting each other at right angles. Nearly in the centre is a spacious square, laid out in walks, shaded by rows of magnificent trees, with the Government House on the northern face of it. This mansion is a beautiful building ; not particularly large, but sufficiently so for the purpose for which it is intended, surrounded by gardens and shrubberies, laid out in tasteful style. The interior is something grand ; it is furnished in the Parisian fashion, and the whole quite a fitting residence for the representative of the French Crown.

The rest of the public buildings are good, and do credit to the local authorities, and the French, who are remarkable for neatness in everything. The town itself is entirely free from any intermixture of huts, or other native habitations. The Black Town lies

to the southward, separated from the city (if it deserves that name), by a sort of fosse. It covers a considerable extent of ground, and is laid out with nearly the same regularity as the European quarter. Little or nothing of the fortifications of this once famous place is now visible; and a small remnant of brick-work, on which stands the flag-staff, something like the portion of a tower, is all that the traveller sees in any way resembling a military wall.

The troops are small in number, amounting, I should say, to some five hundred men; perhaps a few more. If I remember right, there were three hundred and fifty infantry, a kind of *gendarmerie*, which are broken up into small detachments, scattered over the whole of the territory, each village having a military post, under the civil functionary. The remaining are artillery, engineers, and artificers.

All these are natives of Pondicherry, or of the neighbouring towns or villages; and almost all speak the French language fluently. This, I look upon as an excellent plan, calculated to improve the condition of the natives, who are made to learn the language of their rulers; while we, not placing that confidence in a people whom we have conquered, learn their language ourselves, and do all we can, thereby, to prevent them from acquiring ours.

Such a course evinces a sad want of improvement amongst the English, as regards their native troops, for, instead of making them more attached

to us, by enabling them to hold intercourse with us, by talking our own language, we place every difficulty in their way, not only by talking to them in Hindustanee, or Tamil, or Teloogoo, but by giving them no encouragement nor assistance to learn English, or to attempt to do so. We have schools in our regiments, encouraged by Government, for educating the children of the soldiery in their *own* languages ; why should there not be a school also for instructing, in English, such of the men as would wish to learn it ? I am sure many a fine fellow would be glad to learn our tongue, if they had but the opportunity to do so. On the occasion of our appearing before the commandant, there was not a word spoken but French, and the natives talk it beautifully ; they pronounce it much better than they do English.

Pondicherry is, indeed, a very pretty place. It resembles very much, and reminds the traveller of, a French town on the Continent. The entrance to it, from the landside, is certainly prepossessing in its appearance. The roads and streets of the suburbs are lined with avenues of trees ; the roads themselves watered, so that there is little or no dust ; giving the whole a cool, fresh appearance, instead of the hot, dry, parched-up aspect for which our cantonments are so remarkable. The houses of the natives, outside of the town, are well and strongly built ; with nice, neat little gardens in

front of them; enclosed by palings, and little wicket-gates. The residences of the wealthier people are, generally, very good, and appear to be comfortable, giving evidence of how much can be done with a little; for, be it known, the Indo-French make a rupee go about six times as far as we do. Everything is cheap, so that they live upon little or nothing.

The town itself is very healthy, and its situation, as regards the coast, much better calculated for the purposes of trade than Madras. The roadstead is spacious, and the anchorage good. The whole country yields a tolerable revenue; the principal produce is cotton and indigo. The villages and hamlets we saw, seemed to be clean and well-built; and the inhabitants in good condition, without that poverty-stricken look about them, which forms so remarkable a feature in the peasantry of our own territories. It struck me that the whole of the French country was superior, in many respects, to ours; their roads are good, with trees on each side; their land seemed better cultivated, and better irrigated, by means of tanks and canals, constructed for that purpose.

As regards extent of territory, the French certainly have less difficulty in managing their's than we have; it is not, therefore, to be wondered at that they keep everything in such apple-pie order; but, I must confess, there is plenty of room for im-

provement, as far as appearances are concerned, in our own districts. The country, I always thought, burnt up and badly watered, and the crops indifferent. The generality of towns and villages, which I have seen, have been dirty and miserable. There did not seem to me to be any attempts even to better the condition of the poor inhabitants, or to improve the country, or to render the towns and villages more like those under civilized controul.

As long as the revenue is collected, the condition of the miserable peasantry, and of their villages, is of secondary consideration. Were the inhabitants to be improved in mind, as well as in body, all other improvements would necessarily follow. Let the civil authorities be made to look to the comforts of the inhabitants in their respective districts; let their towns and villages be cleaned; their houses and huts repaired, or better constructed; and let the head-men of each be made to look more after their duty than they do; and, it is more than probable that there would not be the misery which, every one knows, now exists to such a fearful extent; and the whole country would be, altogether, in a more flourishing state. The towns and villages would be more healthy, and the inhabitants more comfortable.

How is it that cholera is so frequent a visitor amongst our native hamlets and towns? Because of

the filthy state in which they generally are found, and because of the poverty of the inhabitants. People say that this epidemic is in the air; no doubt such is the case, because, if the ground is charged with filth and dirt, it stands to reason that the air becomes impregnated with noxious exhalations; and, if the inhabitants are so pinched with want, as to have nothing to eat, it is not matter of surprise that they are unable, from weakness of stamina, to wrestle with a disease which the inhaling of an unhealthy atmosphere brings on.

But we seldom hear of cholera, or any other epidemic, breaking out in the villages of the French territories. Let the traveller visit any of them, and he will see how neat and clean they are; let him look at the "*paysans*," and he will observe them to be much better clad, and stouter than our ryots generally are. And, why is the difference? Because the poor people are not so heavily taxed by the revenue collector, and they have, consequently, more to live upon. I think if we were to take a leaf out of the Frenchman's book, it would be a good thing for the country, as well as for the inhabitants.

The town's-people of Pondicherry are mixed. They are composed of Europeans, from the mother-country, or born and bred in India; half-castes; and the aborigines; the latter are generally moslems of the Mopley or Lubby tribe, sea-faring men,

and merchants. Very few Brahmins, or Rajpoots, are residents there; indeed, scarcely any. The troops are moslems, and all of the lowest caste; fellows of the town and its environs; pariahs of the worst quality.

The Indo-French are, apparently, a superior set of people; better than the generality of half-castes and Eurasians to be met with in India. They are better educated, better mannered, and have not that vanity and self-importance, so peculiar to those sort of people, in our parts of the country: besides that they talk French (a kind of patois), much better than our folks talk English, and have not that mode of expression so disgustingly—"chee, chee."

Their women are superior certainly, in every way; there is a dash of the French in their manner and deportment, and their *tout ensemble* has something very *distingué*, which elevates them considerably above our *fair* dames of Vepery celebrity; and their men are much better educated, and much more gentlemanly and civil than our Madrassees, who, with the exception of the clerks in the different public offices, are the most ignorant set of demons one would ever wish to meet with.

The greater part of the society of Pondicherry is composed of these tawny-visaged Frenchmen and their families. The Europeans, however, mix with them; intermarry, and connect themselves, without reference to birth, parentage, or education. It is no

uncommon sight to see a dark man with a fair wife, and *vice versa*. They are very poor indeed. The salary of the governor himself does not amount to more than a thousand, or fifteen hundred rupees a month, and the other public functionaries are paid in proportion ; but the necessaries, and even the luxuries of life are so cheap, that they live as well, if not better, than their wealthier neighbours, and that upon such very small means, that it would seem almost incredible.

All the exportations from France are procurable at Pondicherry at much lower rates than anywhere else ; no duty is charged, or if any, very insignificant to the exorbitant taxations imposed upon everything at our English ports. The inhabitants are therefore able to indulge in all the elegancies, delicacies, and comforts of the Parisian market, the choicest preserved provisions, the most *recherché* confectionary, the most delicious and rarest wines of the Continent, and the richest silks and satins, as well as every other article of fashionable attire, (male as also female,) which can be procured from the mother country ; all these are brought to Pondicherry in great abundance, and at times the market is so overstocked, that things can be purchased up at a mere song.

The regimental messes of our army employ agents at the place, who furnish annual supplies of all the best wines and other articles for the table,

which are to be had cheaper than if sent from Madras, or any other port; and everybody who has partaken of the hospitality of our regimental messes will, I am certain, agree with me, that for the good quality of their wines, the excellency of the viands, and the elegancy of the whole turnout, they are second to none in the whole world. At times, the wines are so cheap at Pondicherry that I have known claret from the most famous houses sell for eight and ten rupees the dozen, while the same is being vended at Madras for twenty-five.

This reminds me of something that occurred at Vellore, in our own regimental mess, a short while previously to my quitting it, and in which our colonel played a prominent part. He had gone on a visit to Pondicherry, and on his return brought with him a cask of claret which he had purchased on his own responsibility for the mess, telling the officers that the wine was excellent, and that when bottled it would stand them about three or four rupees the dozen. The cheapness of the wine was against its soundness, and who ever heard of "*vin ordinaire*" being drank at the —th mess-table?

The colonel was consequently found fault with, and his purchase condemned *nem. con.* However nothing more was said on the subject of the unfortunate cask of claret. The colonel had it bottled and stored in his own cellar, for his own particular use. It so happened one day there was

a large party at our mess, and there were several claret-drinkers at table. The colonel had very quietly, without mentioning a word to anybody, sent a lot of this self-same claret to the mess, and directed that it was to be nicely cooled, and no other put on table.

Dozen after dozen were expended, and during dinner the subject of the colonel's unfortunate purchase, and the rejection of it by the officers, was discussed, and the idea of such a thing as the mess drinking claret at such a price, was ridiculed by all.

The colonel said nothing, but sate laughing in his sleeve to hear a set of young men pretending to judge wines, when they knew nought about them.

After the cloth was removed, and all had apparently drunk to their heart's content, he informed them that the wine they had been imbibing was the identical wine against which they had raised such an outcry, proving that the best wines were not always to be considered so from the price they fetch, but by their sterling good qualities. The old gentleman was rejoiced to know that his claret was not so bad after all (for he prided himself upon being a first-rate judge), and that those who abused it were now loud in its praises.

The whole batch, or rather what remained of it, was forthwith taken off the colonel's hands, and another supply sent for. The wine continued a favourite, and was drunk freely, because of its ridi-

culously low price, and it was distinguished from the other wines by the designation of the "*Colonel Sahib's claret.*" I have known many similar bargains made at Pondicherry, french wines being brought out in large quantities in wood, and of the best vintage.

The shops at Pondicherry are very tempting indeed; they are full of the most exquisite articles that any one would wish to see, or be tempted to purchase. The things are so cheap too that one can scarcely help laying out money, as was the case with my worthy companion and myself; we contrived, on the occasion of our trip, to spend more than prudence would have permitted us to do at any other time, and when we quitted, we found to our astonishment that we had laid out nearly a couple of hundred rupees each!

However, it was "once in the way;" it did not therefore matter much; but that "once in the way" is a sad rogue; he always comes in and gives us a touch on the elbow, bidding us go on, and do what, perhaps, in our sober senses we would not undertake, or throw away our money when we can ill afford it. Beware of that insinuating tempter, my young friends; he comes to you in more ways than one; have nothing to say to him, shun his society, and seek that of "*common sense,*" who will prove a friend in time of need.

We returned home to our hotel in time to make

our toilet for the governor's dinner, after which we walked over to the big house, where the sentries presented arms to us, and we were ushered into the presence of the Marquis by his A.D.C. The Marquis received us with much politeness, discussed the state of the weather, the latest news from Europe, besides other topics, until the dinner was announced, when he led the way into the "*salle-à-manger*," a noble apartment, in which was a round table elegantly laid out, and looking as inviting as possible.

The Marquis seated my noble capitano on his right, and my little self on his left, and distributed the remainder of his guests on either side of us. There were besides ourselves, the commandant of the garrison, the port marine master, the military and private secretaries, the surgeon of the forces, and the A.D.C.; these were severally introduced to us, and we sate down to our meal, which I must confess was the most recherché I had ever partaken of, served in the French style, and exquisitely cooked. The wines were delicious; there was no lack of champaign; the governor and his staff set us a good example, and the brilliancy of French vivacity had additional lustre imparted to it by the nectar which they imbibed, thereby giving zest and relish to our meal, and adding greatly

to the pleasures of the agreeable society into which we were thrown.

Wit and good humour, together with the soldier-like manly frankness of our gallant host, gave extra pleasantry to the festive board, and we left the table, after a lengthened sitting, for the billiard-room, the marquis himself proposing that we should finish the evening by amusing ourselves at "*pool*," while those who did not play could pass their time in smoking Havannah cigars (of which he had an excellent batch), and drinking "*ponche à la romaine*" as much as they wished. These important points being settled, the whole party flocked to the billiard-table accordingly, when the convivialities of the evening commenced in real earnest, and every one was soon well employed, evidently bent upon enjoying himself to his heart's content.

The marquis and my friend got on capitally together. His excellency had been attached to the emperor's staff in many of his campaigns, and was one of his most enthusiastic admirers. He was very eloquent in singing the great man's praises; and his gallant guest expatiated in such rapturous terms, and with such warmth of feeling, on Napoleon's great military genius, his splendid victories, his glorious career up to the very pinnacle of fame, and spoke so favourably of the

whole French nation, that the marquis was delighted beyond measure, and embraced him with that excitement and ardour which are so peculiarly characteristic of the French. He brought out a portrait of the emperor, and dwelt at great length on the features of the departed hero.

The A.D.C. had served in the grand army during the Russian campaign, and had been wounded on more than one occasion. He also had suffered severely from the horrors of the dreadful cold which had been fatal to so many thousands of his comrades, having lost all the toes of one of his feet. This officer was a fine soldierlike gentlemanly person, and chatted away with me at one of the windows for a long time, whilst the others of the party were enjoying themselves.

And thus our Pondicherry adventure ended very agreeably.

## CHAPTER XII.

Author made Adjutant, and promoted to his Lieutenancy—Return again to Vellore—Meeting with a Tiger on the Road, who proves to be the famous Man-Eater of Cunniam-baddy—The Natives' Fear of Tigers—A Disturbance in a Village, showing what drunken Servants will do—March of a Regiment of Foot through Vellore—Comparison between the Royal and Company's Service—Strange Arrangement of the Regiments' Encampment—Want of Carriage and the Consequences—Soldiers selling their Necessaries—The destitute Soldier and his Family—Generosity of the poor Sepoys—Addiction of the Soldier and his Family to drink in India.

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I HAD been not quite four years in the service, when, in consequence of the adjutancy of my regiment falling vacant by the resignation of the then incumbent, the commanding-officer had been kind enough to recommend me for the appointment, and I was agreeably surprised to find myself one fine day in the Gazette for the permanent situation, a circumstance of not very common occurrence in those days, for with a strict adjutant-general it was seldom that an ensign of short standing was appointed at once. Young officers were generally

made to act in the regimental-staff to see if they would be fit, after a fair trial, for the appointment.

The reader may imagine that I felt not a little flattered and rejoiced at having been so fortunate in obtaining what of all others I so much wished for. I considered myself particularly lucky, and longed for the time when I should be able to take up the duties of my new office.

When I obtained the adjutancy I happened to be senior ensign of the regiment. The ensuing month found me a lieutenant, so that in this instance good fortune did not come singly, but smiled upon me most benignly; I was not however enabled to return to regimental head-quarters for two months after, in consequence of there not having been any officer available to relieve me.

At last, however, the order for my departure came; I forthwith packed up my traps, bid farewell to all my friends at Cuddalore, the old pensioners, and friend Duffy included, and started by palkee, in the same way and by the same route I had come, travelling in the morning, stopping for the whole day, and starting again in the afternoon after dinner. I amused myself as usual in shooting, sketching, and strolling about, though when we are alone the time is but dull and monotonous.

Sketching is, however, an excellent pastime in India; there are always such beautiful subjects for the pencil almost everywhere, and it is such an

useful occupation, in more ways than one, that it is surprising officers do not take to it more than they do. What a pleasure it is to be able to refer to the portfolio, and recall to memory by-gone scenes and events, and how satisfactory to know that the traveller has something to show of his wanderings, in his drawing, or sketch-book !

I certainly am no proficient with my pencil or brush, but however poor my productions, still I derived much amusement from the employment, which enabled me to pass many of my leisure hours in-doors, instead of going about in the sun without any good to my health. The new arrival may be sure that the more he keeps himself at home the better, and the less he exposes himself to the heat the better also.

I was seated one day with my sketch-book in my hand, putting down, as fast as I could, a very pretty piece of landscape in a pass or road, between two hills, (part of a range,) known as the "Cunniambaddy Pass," half way between Arnee and Vellore. The bearers had set down the palankeen, and I was thus amusing myself, puffing a cigar by way of companion to my occupation, while they were resting, squatted on the ground a short distance off, eating some cold rice. My attention was suddenly arrested by hearing a rustling among some bushes, and, to my astonishment, I presently saw a huge tiger slowly walking up towards me. I

sate perfectly still, at the same time moving my right hand towards my pillows, and extracting therefrom a pair of pistols, which I carried loaded, in case of accidents. Mr. Tiger walked up to within ten yards of me, and thinking probably that far enough, stood still, wagging his tail and making a noise, which with a cat would be termed *mewing*.

I saw by his open mouth that he had scarcely any teeth, and therefore looked upon him as not a very dangerous neighbour, though I dare say he would have given me a friendly pat with his paw, that would have done me irreparable injury. However, matters did not terminate so tragically. The brute was covered with mange from head to tail; there being little or no hair on him, and his *tout ensemble* proclaimed him to be rather ancient, but, at the same time, induced me to come to the conclusion that he had already tasted human flesh. All tigers indulging in such delicate feeding suffer from it after, by being affected with mange sooner or later; it is a strange fact, but how to be accounted for I cannot conceive.

I had put down book and pencil immediately this visitor had made his appearance, and held one of my pistols ready cocked, to give him a salute, should he come too near; meanwhile, I picked up some stones with my left hand, and threw them at him, with a view to driving him away; I did this

because I did not like to venture a shot at him, not being particularly anxious to commence hostilities where no ultimate benefit was likely to accrue therefrom.

In the meantime, the bearers sate eating their meal quite unconscious of the propinquity of so dreaded a foe ; and I was in no hurry to inform them, knowing full well that I stood a good chance of being left alone in my glory, if I evinced the slightest degree of alarm or created one in their breasts. Presently, however, one of them, came to the palkee, and, seeing the animal, immediately shouted out, " bagh ! bagh !" (tiger ! tiger !) most lustily. This alarmed the rest, and all came running together, tumbling and sprawling over each other in most laughable manner, not knowing where the monster was ; but when they saw him standing as I have described, their alarm became so great that it was with the greatest difficulty I could prevent their running away.

The noise and hubbub caused by these men scared away the tiger, who slank off into the jungle, and the bearers begged me to fire at him as he moved, by way of farewell shot, for they all declared that he was the famous man-eater, so well known in that part of the country. This, however, I did not do, but got the fellows together and made them take up the palkee for a start.

"He will carry away one of us, sir!" exclaimed the head-bearer, more frightened than the rest, "what shall we do?"

"Take up the palkee instantly, and do'nt make a fool of yourself!" replied I, "what harm can a poor toothless brute like that do any of you?"

"Harm, sir?" vociferated the man, "harm! why he is the famous man-eater of Cunniambaddy. He will be sure to attack us!"

"And if he does," said I, "we will shoot him. You shall do so yourself, master head-bearer, so here take you one of my pistols, and pray keep it ready, but mind and do'nt be firing it into the palkee, or at one of your comrades by mistake."

With that I handed him one of the pistols, taking care beforehand to remove the cap from the nipple, a precautionary measure I thought requisite, considering the state of mind of him into whose hands I placed the weapon. Encouraged at receiving the pistol, which in the moment of their alarm they considered as a sufficient artillery force against a host of tigers, the fellows shouldered the palkee and started off at a pace which evinced a strong desire on their parts to get away from so dangerous a locality as fast as they possibly could. No anticipated tiger, however, presented itself, and we reached the end of our journey that evening without further adventure.

That a tiger and her cubs used to visit the

village of Cunniambaddy and frequent the neighbouring hills and jungles, is a well known fact, and I recollect having been informed that a poor woman and her child were, on one occasion, pounced upon and carried off by these horrible visitors, and again another female fell a victim to their incursions. Natives have a particular dread of tigers; and, whenever one is known to be in the neighbourhood of their dwellings, they become so panic-stricken that they hide themselves in their houses, bar their doors and windows, and remain in that state for several days without food or sustenance; the least noise outside making them fancy the presence of the object of their dread, and nothing convincing them to the contrary, excepting the hearing of somebody's voice whom they may happen to know.

I once passed through a village in this state of fright. I could procure no supplies of any sort; there was not a soul stirring in the place, all was as silent as death, and had it not been for my happening to meet an European soldier travelling through, who was of the greatest assistance to me, I should have fared but badly on that day. As it was, we proceeded to the house of the headman, and by dint of knocking and bawling contrived to induce him to unbar his door and supply us with what we wanted. A tiger had carried off a calf which had been tethered in a field hard by,

and this had alarmed the inhabitants, who, in their fright, quite forgot that the animal had got what he wanted, and that there was no further cause for fear until he came again.

But I did not reach Vellore without another adventure, though I cannot exactly call it so ; still it was an affair which, at the time, caused me not a little annoyance and perplexity. I had sent my servant on to the next stage, desiring him to have some tea, or supper, ready for me when I came ; as I would stop there but a couple of hours or so, previously to running into cantonments the following morning, then distant from us about fifteen miles. When I arrived at the village I found it, to my surprise, and, I must say, chagrin, in a state of uproar, the inhabitants bawling and shouting in terms which were not difficult for me to comprehend.

My palkee was carried to a tope of tamarind-trees, where I found my horses and baggage all ready, but no servant, no tea, no supper appeared to welcome my arrival. I guessed the cause of the hubbub immediately ; and, upon inquiry, found that the rascal head-boy had got drunk, and been insolent to the "*potaile*" of the village ; that he had struck some of the villagers ; and that they were paying him back in his own coin, probably with compound interest.

I thought of the affair with the Pondicherry peo-

ple, and expected similar, if not worse treatment. I fancied, however, that not only was my domestic in a state of inebriety, but that the "*potaīl*," or head-man, as well as others of the village, were also under the influence of the jolly god. I, therefore, anticipated something unpleasant occurring, and prepared accordingly. I stood outside of my palkee, with my pistols and sword on the roof of it. This I did, to show the drunken rogues that I would give them a warm reception if they attacked me, which there was no saying whether they would do or not, considering the state of excitement they all appeared to be in; though I determined not to proceed to extremities without absolute necessity.

In about ten or fifteen minutes after my arrival, I heard loud shouts of "*addie! addie! addie!*" (*beat! beat! beat!*) in the direction of the houses, and I presently saw my unfortunate domestic running for the very life of him, followed by about fifty or sixty fellows, with sticks and bamboos in their hands, giving the inebriated runaway "*addie*" to their hearts' content. It served him right, and I was glad of it; but fearful lest the villagers should attack my bivouac, I sent one of my horsekeepers forward to desire them not to come nearer, and that if they had anything to say against my servant, they were to send me their head-man, to whom alone I was responsible for any misconduct of which the said servant might have been guilty;

however, they knocked my horsekeeper over, and pushed on; my domestic had, meanwhile, rolled in, and taken refuge behind the palkee, where he lay as drunk as a fiddler.

Seeing that matters were likely to be serious, I seized hold of one of my pistols, and called out, that I would shoot the first man who approached, and saying that I was going into Vellore, and would lodge a complaint against them at the Civil Court for the disgraceful disturbance which they had one and all created. This had the desired effect; they halted, and one of them came forward, and said to me :—

“ Your servant struck the potail, and we are come to take him up by his orders.”

“ Tell the potail to come here himself; I wish to speak to him,” replied I, knowing well that the man was drunk, and could not come of himself.

“ He is ill in his bed,” said the fellow, “ and cannot come !”

“ Very well, then,” said I, “ my servant shall not go with you, that I am determined.”

“ We will go and report to the potail that you resist the civil authorities !”

“ Do so, at once,” said I, “ and tell the potail that I suspect he, as well as all the rest of you, are as bad as my servant, and that, unless he comes instantly, I will report him as unfit to do his duty from the effects of intoxication, when called upon

by gentlemen passing through his station ! Now, be off, or I'll make you !”

And they went off to bring the potail. In the interim, I drenched my domestic with a jorum of mustard and hot water, by way of an emetic, and made him sufficiently sober to get me some supper, for which I felt a peculiar inclination, not having tasted anything since breakfast. In due time, the potail made his appearance, and a pretty figure he was, too ! He was so completely overcome with drink, as not to be able to walk, but rolled about most amusingly, and sang most gloriously.

I saw how matters *stood*, for he could not *stand* at all, and forthwith served him with a hot dose, similar to what the servant had imbibed, and detained him under a tree until I saw he was sufficiently sobered to be of service to myself and followers. I then informed my friend that I would most certainly report him if he did not instantly procure me all I wanted for my supper, fresh milk, eggs, rice, and so forth.

This he promised to do with the greatest alacrity, so I let him go ; and, in due course of time, the requisites made their appearance, and I got my supper, which was not, however, even commenced until past twelve o'clock, after which my bivouac retired to rest, and all subsided into silence, save the barking of the village dogs, which kept up an unceasing yelping and howling until daylight.

My poor servant had been severely handled by the villagers ; his eyes were both shut, his nose and mouth fearfully cut and lacerated, and his whole body so bruised, that he could scarcely move.

I reached Vellore the following morning ; took a nice house close to the barracks, and made myself comfortable ; and now I hoped that I should have less moving about ; of marching and countermarching I had had sufficient to make me tired of it ; packing and unpacking was a bore, and I looked upon the state of discomfort to which a traveller is subjected with disgust. I therefore hoped that, as the adjutant, I should remain quiet for the rest of the time we might be quartered at Vellore, and that I should not be under the necessity of quitting the place, unless the regiment itself were moved to another station. I found myself in a very responsible situation, and rather a peculiar one, too, the duties of which I had yet to learn, and a new commanding officer, to whom I was almost a stranger, my kind friend, the old colonel, having, during my absence, been removed to another regiment.

However, I determined to put my shoulder to the wheel, work hard, do my duty, and make others do theirs. The old adjutant was a friend of mine, and gave me every assistance in his power, and, considering all things, I got on tolerably well. Everything was in my favour ; I knew my drill and parade duties well enough, and had only those of

the office to become *au fait* at; this I left to practice and time, hoping, in the end, to become more conversant with the work than I was at the commencement.

I knew that I could not get on unless I worked myself; I therefore determined to do as much of the office duties as I could, knowing that in nine cases out of ten, if left to the orderly-room clerks, I should entail upon mine own shoulders extra trouble, whereas, if I supervised the whole of the duties, I felt pretty confident that I could not go very far wrong. This system I pursued until I threw up the appointment, six years after, and I found it to answer capitally.

But I will not test the patience of the reader any longer with such matters, though I would fain hope that, if any of them should hereafter find themselves similarly situated to what I then was, they will set to work as I did when I got the adjutancy, within four years after my first landing in the country.

Very soon after my having become re-established in my quarters at Vellore, the European regiment, which was stationed in the neighbourhood, at Arnee, received orders to move, *en route*, to Bellary, a large garrison in the Ceded Districts. They passed through Vellore on their journey, and, as that was the first time I had ever witnessed a king's regiment on a line of march, I had a good opportunity of observing how matters were conducted,

and what difference there was in the way of carrying on such a duty between the two services.

This corps, as has been already remarked, had been a long time in India; they were, consequently, more orientalized, as it were, and more accustomed to the mode of proceeding on such occasions as that which I am now about to mention will prove; but with them, even, there was much to animadvert upon, and, consequently, much that was irregular.

The reader must bear in mind, that I do not intend, in making these remarks, to pick holes in the coats of my fellow-soldiers of the royal army; I wish merely to point out, that irregularities *are* committed in it, as well as in that of the Honourable Company; that our good folks at home should not look upon the one as so far superior to the other, as I very much fear they really do; and that the regiments serving in India should not be considered by them as very types of perfection, while those of the native army are thrown in the background.

True is it, that our royal troops are second to *none* in the world for bravery in the field, and for discipline; still, irregularities are as continually occurring amongst them as amongst those of the Indian army; nay, I venture to say, more frequently; let not, therefore, my English readers think that our European regiments are faultless; they are far from that, I can assure them; at the

same time, let me beg it to be understood, that I do not say this from invidious feelings ; so far from such being the case, I have always, as an humble individual, entertained the greatest respect and regard for those regiments which I have from time to time met, as well as always been of but one opinion of them as soldiers and comrades in arms ; there *can* be but one opinion, and who is there in the whole world that will presume to gainsay it ?

The British army stands pre-eminent ; but that does not argue that they are *immaculate* ; we will, therefore, proceed to show that we are correct in what we say, by way of backing the opinion which we have taken upon ourselves to express ; so let us follow this regiment of foot as it breaks ground from the cantonments of Arnee in prosecution of its march to Bellary, and let us observe how the first few stages of the journey were gone through.

I had been looking out for this corps to pass through Vellore for several days, as I was anxious to see them moving, for more reasons than one. On the morning of their coming into the station, I rode out for several miles, on purpose to meet, and have a good look at them. As far as the main body was concerned, everything was as it should be ; the column, *en route*, was correct to the letter, and presented a very soldier-like appearance in every sense ; there was the advanced guard, the

band, drums, and fifes, and then the sections of the column ; the men looked very well as they trudged along with that regularity of step so peculiar to the British soldier.

I could find no fault with the column of march, none whatever ; but what astonished me was, when the main body had passed me a considerable distance, to see the great number of stragglers. The whole road, for several miles, was lined with them ; and what the cause could be I was at a loss to conceive ; I could, not, however, help thinking it strange, that so great a number of men should have been allowed to fall to the rear, nor could I help remarking, how many of them there were not over and above steady in their gait.

Arrack-shops and toddy-booths abounded between Arnee and Vellore, and there were followers among the soldiery, who vended their abominable poisonous trash for little or nothing ; so, I presumed, the poor fellows must have been taking an extra morning dram or two, by way of keeping the cold out ; and I do not think I am wrong in saying that I observed a sprinkling of certain individuals with one, two, and three stripes on their arms, amongst the lower classes of the inebriated.

When the regiment, or rather the skeleton of it, marched into Vellore, the sight was certainly not a very pleasing one. The column was a small column, as I said before, owing to the number of men

in the rear, or who had been left behind to follow ; the baggage and camp-followers were enormous ; I had no idea that an European regiment could have had so many.

In addition to the large number of men attached to the camp-equipage department, there were all the soldiers' cooks and servants, so many to each company, with their respective families ; and besides them, there were the bandy-men, the dooly-bearers, the bullock-men, the camel-men, and a host of others, which I will not take upon myself to enumerate ; and when to this vast concourse of human beings, men, women and children, I add the families of the soldiery themselves, the reader will be able to form some conception of the multitude attached to one single regiment.

I am going to find fault again, but I cannot help it. The ground selected for the encampment of this regiment in Vellore was the very worst I would ever wish to place European soldiery upon. The tents were pitched upon the glacis of the fort, not a particularly wide one, with the rear resting upon its crest, and, consequently, having the effluvia of the ditch-water close, and constantly exhaling among the men. The space being cramped, the tents were closely crowded together. The front of the camp rested on swampy paddy-fields, so that the whole was objectionable in every respect.

In addition to these drawbacks of locality, there

was another as bad, if not worse. The regiment was pitched close to the pettah, or native town, the soldiery visited it in crowds, and what was the consequence? They played the deuce among the arrack-shops during the night, and when they marched the following morning, there were but a few of them very sober. All this might have been obviated. There was much better encampment ground outside the cantonment, at the race-course, open and dry, and consequently healthy; whereas that fixed upon was confined, and as damp as a dirty ditch and paddy-fields could render it.

Now, had the corps been kept outside, about a couple of miles from the place, all this drinking would have been obviated; the men would have gone to their tents sober, and marched fresh the next morning, without leaving a soul behind, whereas several of the fellows were picked up, lying dead drunk about the streets of the pettah. I am only surprised that some of them did not tumble into the ditch, to be snapped up by the alligators.

It is a bad plan to encamp troops, particularly Europeans, near a town or village, and that for many reasons; the above will speak for itself, independently of others, which, however, I will not now dwell upon: soldiery in camp should be kept to their tents, and never be allowed to move beyond

reach of the sound of their own drums, or bugles. But to proceed.

When a regiment is ordered to march, there is always one great difficulty, and that is, a want of carriage. The bandy and bullock proprietors do not like accompanying troops, not only because of cholera, but because of the risk they run of losing their cattle. When an epidemic breaks out, the drivers are among the first to be carried off; it is astonishing to witness the havoc which is caused among the bandy-men and coolies. With such disadvantages, then, staring them in the face, it is not at all surprising that, as soon as they hear of troops being about to move, they hurry off from their dwellings, driving their carts and cattle to some distant village, taking the former to pieces, hiding one wheel here and another there, and sending the latter to graze among the hills, and themselves taking to the plough, or other occupation, to avoid detection, or even the possibility of their being pressed into the service.

These poor fellows have a particular aversion to being employed by European troops, because the soldiers maltreat them, and will not sometimes pay them their hire, to say nothing of overloading their bandies to such a degree as to render it very hard work for the bullocks to drag them. The difficulty of procuring carriage was particularly felt by the

regiment to which I am at present alluding, so much so, that nearly all the families and their baggage, as well as that of officers and men, were unable to start when the head-quarters marched out ; they were, consequently, left behind, to follow as they best could, or as soon as carriage could be procured for them.

The whole country, as far down as Madras itself, was scoured for bandies and bullocks, with little or no success ; such as were procurable were of the worst description. Many were found concealed in the way I have described ; but if a bandy was put together, there were no bullocks, or if the bullocks were caught there was no bandy ; so that the commissariat department, whose duty it is to supply these, as well as other means of transport, were very hard pushed ; indeed they could not render that assistance which the exigencies of the service required ; and what were the consequences of such a state of things ? A large portion of the regiment were left behind, instead of (as they ought to have done, had matters been properly contrived) following their colours, when the regiment first broke ground.

I do not think I am far out in my reckoning, when I say that stragglers, by twos and threes, were passing through Vellore for upwards of a week ; and the manner in which these unfortunate people did travel was truly pitiable. The soldiers

themselves, mostly on foot, followed by their children, many of them barefooted and bareheaded, their women also walking, or riding inside their bandies, or on bullocks, and from the objects they all presented, many of them must have been destitute of food, to procure which they were carrying their necessaries in their hands, and selling them to the sepoys, who purchased the things for little or nothing.

I remember several of the soldiers coming to me with their *ammunition boots* for sale, to scrape a little money together, some to get the wherewithal to eat, and others, of whom I fear the number predominated, to purchase a dram or two; the one to appease the cravings of hunger, and the other, that of the burning thirst which so peculiarly affects the European soldier in the east. The men sold these boots for a rupee or two per pair, and they were bought up by the officers of the place as fast as they were brought to their doors. One poor man came to me in a truly miserable plight, with a pair of these boots in his hands.

“ Is it a pair of stout boots, yer honour will be wanting this fine sunshiny mornin?” said he, “ I have a pair here, sur, that’ll just fit ye; ye may have em, sur, for half a rupee, which will enable a poor soldier and his fam’ly to get a bit of somewhat to eat for our breakfasts, yer honour.”

Upon my word, I could not help feeling for this

poor man. The idea that he was actually going about begging, as were many more of his comrades, when, by a little good management, he might, with his family, have been comfortably under canvass with his regiment, was truly distressing.

"I do not want your boots, my poor fellow," said I, "or, if I did, I would not encourage you to break through the strict rules of the service, which prohibit a soldier disposing of his kit, or any part of it. Why sell them at all? Have you not received your advance of pay? Or, if you are hard up; why not apply to the captain of your company for assistance?"

"Pay, sur? Not a bit of pay have I seen!" replied the man. "Is'nt it my pay that has gone for to pay that black nigger of a bandy-man, to carry my wife and the childer, and the thraps in? Not a farden have I, yer honour, to feed them, or to get a drop of drink either."

"I am afraid," replied I, "that too great a portion of your pay has gone towards the drink, and little towards the feeding. Come, now, tell the truth and shame the devil, have you not had more than one dram to day; it is now twelve o'clock, mid-day? You did not get that for nothing, I'll warrant; where did you get your money from, and why have you not spent that in feeding your family, which you have thrown away in drinking the poison which kills half of you?"

“ Ah, yer honour ! I see you are a 'cute one, and know some of our thricks ! How am I to git on in this hot counthry, with my knappersack on my back, and my firelock here, without a drop of the crathur to give me strength ?”

“ Then you acknowledge that you have had more drams than one, and that you have really left your family to starve ; and now, what are you doing ? Why, disposing of your regimental kit to get a paltry sixpence to give them a meal ! You are an Irishman, too ; I thought you had too much regard for your families to treat them in that manner, and too much self-respect to be guilty of a breach of the articles of war, which lays your back open to be cut up by the lash ? Do you call yourself a soldier and a man, and yet behave as you are now doing towards those whom you have to protect, to cherish, and to nourish in a foreign land ? Are you not now ashamed of yourself ?”

“ Ah y'er honour, what am I to say ?” answered the rugged soldier, evidently much moved. “ What am I to do ? I have not a pice to get on wid ; my company is three stages in advance, and how am I to feed myself and family until I catch up the regiment ?”

“ And yet with these difficulties staring you in the face, you spend what little you have in drink, leaving those who are dependant on you to starve ; and, to make matters worse, you go about in a

strange place, hawking your kit for sale; putting half a rupee on a pair of home-made boots, which are worth four times that sum, thereby laying yourself open to severe punishment on being detected, which you most certainly will be at the first inspection-parade you may have on your joining your company. What will you do now?"

"I must sell the boots, y'er honour," said he, "or starve! I have no other means of getting a breakfast!"

"Well," said I, "you shall not starve if I can help it; but, nevertheless, I will not be the purchaser of your boots. Keep them yourself, and when you muster them at your next kit inspection, think of me, and scratch your back, and thank your stars that it is not scratched by the cat instead!"

"Thank y'er honour," returned the Hibernian, "I will do that same; I'll think of you at every kit inspection, if it will please you."

"It will please me indeed," said I, "if your doing so will save you from the disgrace of being publickly flogged! What would your old father, or your old mother, or your sisters, or your brothers say, if they heard of their Terence (which is your name, I think,) having been flogged for selling his boots for drink? And what——"

"Do'nt say a word more about it, sur," inter-

rupted the soldier, " You have touched my heart by mentioning my relations in my dear native village ! Ohoon ! ohoon ! "

And I saw the tear drop in the eye of the poor Irishman, as thoughts of home came across him.

" Well, my man," said I, " glad indeed am I that I have stirred up your feelings. I see you are not so bad as many in this country. Whenever you are inclined to do anything wrong, think of old Ireland and those dear to you at your native home, and depend on it, you will have reason to be thankful to God for calling them to mind should they be the means of preventing your doing anything wrong, and as this day's occurrence may sometimes recur to your memory, you will, perhaps, feel glad that you paid me this visit, although you have not succeeded in selling me your boots. Where is your family at this present moment ? "

" I have left them, y'er honour, under a tree about half a mile out of this place."

" Go and fetch them all here, bag and baggage, and you shall have a good breakfast, every one of you ; but mind, leave those boots here."

" God Almighty bless y'er honour !" exclaimed the delighted soldier, and, leaving his boots, he quitted my house to go fetch his family.

This, gentle reader, was one, out of many of the wretched soldiery who continued passing through Vellore for the number of days I have mentioned.

This poor fellow was one, I say; how many more there were similarly situated, probably worse off, I cannot tell; but that there were many, I am certain, because numbers came to me; it was truly lamentable to see them, but what were we to do? With no officer to control them, and moving as they did by twos and threes, it was not at all to be wondered at that they committed themselves in the way I have mentioned.

There were non-commissioned officers here and there, but they were just as bad as the rest. Many a poor wretch did I see rolling along the road in a state of intoxication, exposed to the heat of the sun (for they marched at all times of the day), without any covering except that of their heavy chacos, or their small foraging caps; covered with dirt and perspiration from head to foot, unshaven beards of three or four days' growth, probably destitute of food, the only thing which they may have taken being some horrible buttermilk, or what is as bad, if not worse, a draught or two of toddy, accompanied by sundry drams of arrack; but—

While the Irish soldier was gone to fetch his family, I hurried my servants over to the mess-house, from whence I procured a quantity of cold meat, which we converted into sundry stews and grills; we made a sufficiency of good strong tea, with plenty of bread and butter. A table was laid

with a nice clean cloth in the back verandah, and everything was arranged as comfortable as possible for my expected guests. As before observed, I invariably experienced much delight and satisfaction in showing hospitality and kindness to all classes of my countrymen, whether officers or private soldiers. I always considered that the latter were just as much entitled to acts of benevolence as the former, if not more. I therefore never hesitated for a moment in calling in a poor way-worn soldier, and giving him a day's rest and a hearty meal, an act of charity which costs one nothing, and which I do wish I could see exercised by others a little more than it is.

Not that I claim any praise to myself for so doing; far from it; but because I think that the poor humble man will do a kind act towards his betters whenever it may be in his power, and I do not see why we should not exercise the same kindly feelings towards those below us; surely there can be nothing degrading in taking in and feeding a footsore, weary traveller, whatever his situation in life; we do so at home often enough; why should we not do so abroad? I trust, therefore that the good reader will be of the same opinion on this point, and exonerate me from any charge of egotism, or the appearance of it, which the relating of this circumstance may lay at my door. Should the un-

charitably inclined feel disposed to find fault, smile, or sneer, I can simply say in quoting the old motto, "honi soit qui mal y pense."

In about half an hour's time or more, my friend Terence O'Brien arrived, bringing his family. His bandy, a miserable broken-down thing, I ordered to the back of the house, and made Paddy muster his force. Let me see; there was his wife; she was a respectable looking woman, with an Irish brogue that rendered her language perfectly unintelligible to me; then there were four children, besides a baby in arms, and one on the stocks, if appearances spoke the truth; strange that poor people always have most children; and last came Terence himself: a tolerably strong party thought I to endeavour to catch up the regiment without a single pice wherewithal to get themselves a meal the whole way!

I looked upon this circumstance as a capital opportunity of showing our sepoys a specimen of the lower classes of our countrymen, and giving them an idea of their mode of proceeding in private life; so, as there were many of our fellows at my house on business at the time, I mentioned to them what was going on, and what I was going to do. They consequently loitered about, peeping through the doors and windows, to have a look at a novelty which, perhaps, few of them had before witnessed.

Terence brought the whole of his party up into the back verandah, and, I must confess, a more pitiable sight I never saw; misery and starvation were the predominating features, and they really looked as if the sun had exerted his utmost in endeavouring to roast them; the poor woman and the children were burned most dreadfully, and this, added to the filth and dirt of some three or four days, rendered their appearance anything but pleasing to the eye; however, with the aid of plenty of clean water and soap, we contrived to make them somewhat respectable, and the exertions of the barber, on Terence's chin, worked wonders on his visage, which had not been touched by a razor for a week.

When everything was ready, I bade my guests sit down and fall to; and, as our serjeant-major happened to be in the house, I begged of him to do the honours of the meal, saying, as I quitted the room,

“ Now, my friends, make a hearty breakfast; let the poor children eat and drink as much as they can, and whatever there is over, you can pack up in your basket, and carry on with you! And, look you, Terence O'Brien, every mouthful you swallow—and I trust they will be many, remember the boots—don't forget the boots, my lad.”

“ God bless ye! Thank ye, yer honour, sur!” exclaimed both husband and wife, and I left them to themselves, to enjoy their feed. When the meal

was over, I desired the poor soldier and his family to remain in the house until the evening, when he could start afresh on his journey, after having had some dinner, which I would order for them at four o'clock, so that they should not be put to any extra expensè. To this, of course, he readily assented, and a room having been cleared out for that purpose, their bedding, &c. was brought inside, and the whole of them turned in, to take a sleep, which I suppose they had not enjoyed for many days. Poor Paddy expressed himself most grateful to me for my kindness and consideration, and declared he would never part with the boots which had procured for himself and family so good a friend.

In the meantime, I had contrived to settle with the proprietor of the wretched vehicle which had conveyed him, and all he had, thus far on his journey; though from its *tout ensemble*, it seemed to me matter of wonder that it had got thus far. This bandy I dismissed, and, as I had a little spare cash in a bag, I thought I might as well lay out some of it in doing an act of charity to a poor man; so I sent one of my men into the town, and engaged a fresh cart, &c., to take the party and baggage to their destination; paying the driver his full hire in advance, and, as it happened to belong to a relation of one of our men, I had no apprehensions of misbehaviour on the part of the driver, (it being very frequently the case, where the hire is

paid in full, for the bandyman to disappear suddenly, with his conveyance and bullock,) or of his not fulfilling the job for which he had been hired.

When Terence came out to look at his conveyance, he was quite surprised to find it gone, and another superior one ready in its stead. This arrangement of mine, and the being told that there would be nothing further to pay on his reaching Bellary, drew forth fresh expressions of gratitude ; but I stopped him by begging him to think of the boots ! Poor man ! He was quite bewildered with amazement, and appeared to be overwhelmed with delight, at thoughts of being able to get on his journey with so much comfort.

At four o'clock, I had a dinner for him, consisting of a good piece of roast beef, vegetables, and plum pudding ; the débris of this meal were also put away in the basket, with sundry loaves of bread, and the remains of an old cheese, which I happened to have in the house. I gave them some beer to drink, and, before they started, my servant put up some tea, sugar, coffee, and rice, &c., in small quantities, and handed them over to the poor woman, who did nothing, all the time, but give vent to tears of gratitude ; coming out with strange Irish expressions, which I never recollect to have heard before. In the evening, they prepared for a start, and, when all was ready, the Irish soldier

came up to me, and while the tear-drop glistened in his eye, he thanked me for all I had done for him.

“Thank ye, y’er honour!” said he. “You have saved me from ruin! Your act of kindness this day to me and mine, has opened my eyes, and I shall never forget the advice you have given me, or the warning either. May God bless you! and if poor Terence O’Brien can serve you, remember, his heart’s blood is your’s!”

“Remember the boots, Terence;” said I, “don’t forget them; and, as you are but a young man, I hope that they may yet be the means of your becoming a serjeant. In the garrison, in the camp, on sentry, or on your cot; in the battle-field, or on the breach, don’t forget the boots!”

“Hurrah, y’er honour! Its not only the boots, but y’er darlint self, that I’ll remember! Good bye, sur; and may God bless you, and soon make ye a cornel!”

I then shook hands with him, as also with the good woman, during which latter ceremony, I placed a small packet in her grasp, containing ten rupees, for her own private use.

“Do not open this,” said I, “until you reach your next stage. I place it your hands; let not your husband know of it, but keep it yourself, for your road expenses; and, whenever he feels inclined

to drink, or do anything wrong, remind him of this day, and his boots!"

"That I will, sur; and God bless you a thousand times!"

And the bandy left the compound, followed by a whole posse of my men, who, I afterwards learned, had gone out, stopped the soldier, and insisted upon his accepting a small sum of money, amounting to some five rupees, which they had collected at the moment. Noble, generous fellows! Has not the poor, despised sepoy a feeling heart? Who ever says he has not, does him an injustice, as great as it is undeserved.

I have before remarked upon the trials and sufferings to which a regiment of Native Infantry is exposed on a line of march. Those of an European regiment must be two-fold, particularly as the latter has the heat of the climate to contend against. As far as the eating and drinking are concerned, the European soldiers are well provided, though, I should imagine, from the specimens I saw on the occasion I have just alluded to, that those who have families are almost as badly off for the means of subsistence (probably worse) as our sepoys; and, when cholera breaks out in an European regiment, and camp, the havoc committed is as fearful as it is in that of a native camp. The soldiery suffer as much as, if not more than, the followers, owing, it is to be presumed, to the careless manner and irregular way in

which they generally live, to say nothing of the predisposition to the complaint, brought on by the baneful effects of drink.

People may say and write what they like to the contrary, but our poor unfortunate countrymen, in India, drink most dreadfully, and so do the women, and so do the children, too, when they can get it. Speak to an European, or his wife, and if they do not, one or both, smell of arrack, I am sadly mistaken; and, as long as arrack continues to be an item of supply in the canteens, the soldiery, as well as their families, will partake of it, and the consequences will be apparent; and, whenever cholera does make its appearance, the drunkards are among the first to go; though I have heard say that they are the toughest, and will stand all kinds of vicissitudes much better than the steadiest and most sober in the regiments.

But, be this as it may, it cannot be denied that drinking prevails to a fearful extent, and people who are not aware of the fact, are very much astounded when they are informed that such is really the case, and what is worse still, the women are as much addicted to the strong waters as the men. How many, alas, have I seen in a state of intoxication, and how many did I see when the —— passed through Vellore! The force of example affects the children, who, seeing their parents so fond of liquor, and indulging in it to such an extent, think it to be

as good for themselves as they fancy it is for their parents ; they, therefore, imbibe the poison, whenever they have an opportunity, either by stealing it out of the cupboard, or by obtaining it from the natives, who bring it clandestinely for sale into the barracks.

END OF VOL. II.



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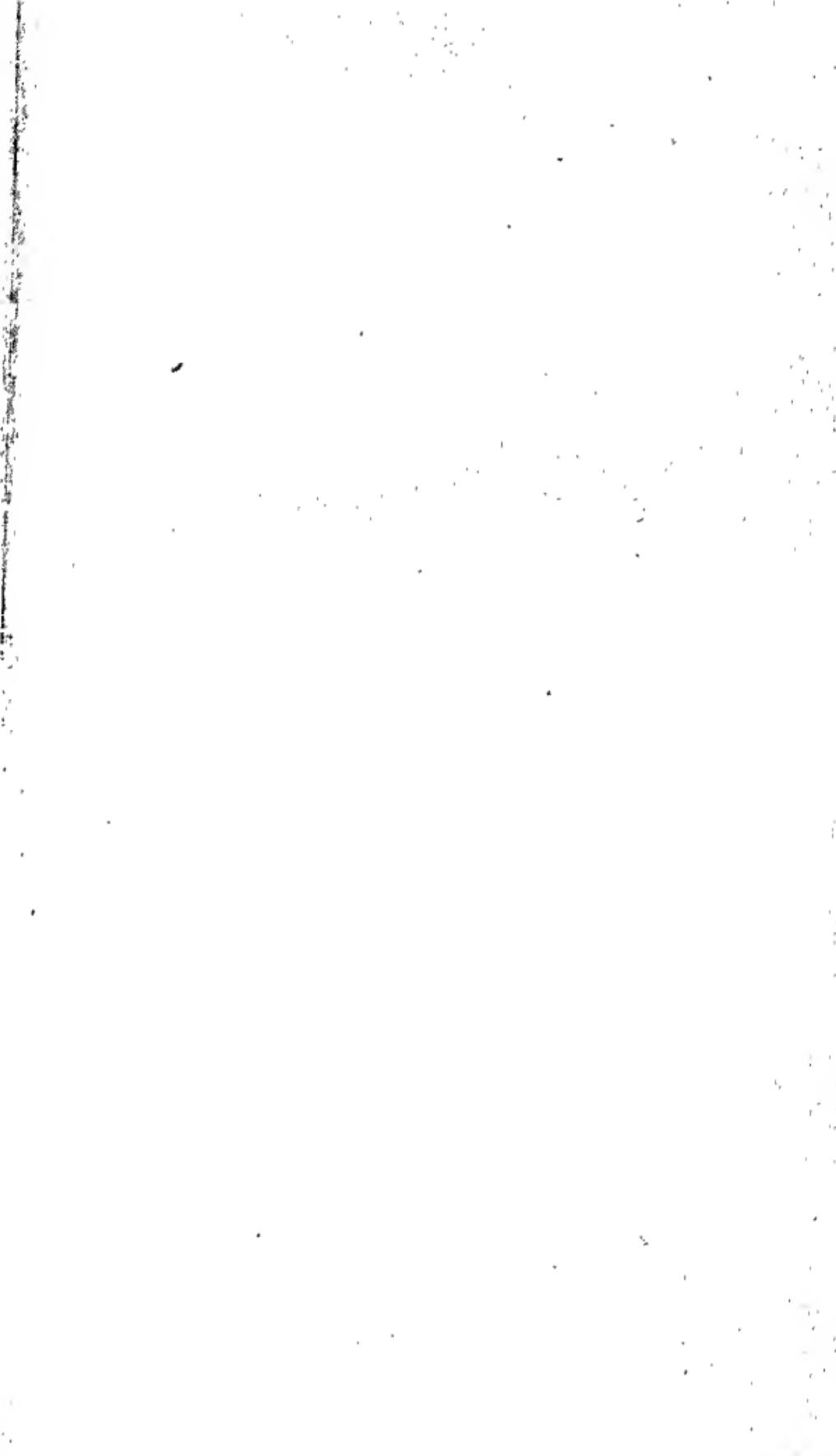
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